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CARRY MORGAN

CARRY MORGAN; OR, THE STOLEN PURSE.

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CARRY MORGAN;

OR,

THE STOLEN PURSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

'JEM THE TINKER,' 'BIDDY THE MAID OF ALL WORK,'
'SAM SILVA,' ETC.

'To reform the guilty, and to restore them as useful members of the community is a glorious triumph of humanity, and marks a State rising in the scale of civilisation; but to have no other resource than the punishment of death, reminds one of the miserable subterfuge of a vanished age, barren in expedients to save, strong only to destroy.'—WILLIAM ALLEN.

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CARRY MORGAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE THIEF.

IN the year 1813, a young girl sat reading, one lovely summer day, in a garden attached to a large old-fashioned house, situated near a county town in the heart of Wales. She made a pretty object in the landscape, with her white dress and blue sash, her dark luxuriant curls and clear healthy complexion, shaded by finely arched eyebrows and long eye-lashes, which half hid the lustrous orbs fixed so intently on the page before her.

The scene in the midst of which she sat was one of great natural beauty,—the still, smooth water of the broad ferry which lay in the foreground, reflecting, as in a mirror, the lovely blue of the cloudless sky

above, and the shadows of the mountains beyond, on which the rays of the mid-day sun fell with dazzling brilliancy, lighting them up from peak to peak, and from crag to crag, with hues and tints of ever changing beauty.

The garden itself was full of sweet scents and sounds; the fragrance of trees, of flowers, and of fresh green grass mingling with the singing of birds, the gentle rustling of leaves, and the melodious hum of various insects, rejoicing in the sunbeams. A delicious, drowsy, dreamy place it was to occupy on a sultry day, as Carry Morgan presently felt, for her head began gradually to droop and nod, and at last, after several starts and rousings up, the book fell unheeded from her hand.

Then a soft, stealthy footstep approached, for a young man who had been furtively watching her for some time, concealed behind some thick bushes at a short distance, advanced and crept past her on his way to the house. He was apparently about twenty years of age, and his dirty, ragged, starved appearance presented a striking contrast to the dainty, plump figure of the well-dressed, well-cared-for girl whom he watched so keenly as he crept along.

He had been waiting his opportunity, for the dining-room window, which reached to the ground, was wide open, and the servants were at that hour busy in the regions behind. To step across the sill, look

greedily round the comfortable apartment, seize a small silk purse lying on a work-table, and step out again was the work of a very few moments; but as with bated breath and noiseless step he once more passed the sleeping girl, she suddenly started, and dreamily opened her eyes. Fast ran the thief as she looked after him with sleepy wonder; but the sight of her purse dangling from his hand roused her to a keen perception of the nature of the case, and springing to her feet, without a moment's thought or hesitation, she gave chase, screaming at the pitch of her voice, 'Stop thief! stop thief!'

Through the garden gate and into the highroad ran Carry, angry and breathless, eyes sparkling, curls and ribbons streaming behind her, urged on by having the fugitive in full view; fear gave him wings, but Carry was strong and healthy, and withal a swift runner, and the thought of her purse inspired her with courage to keep up the race. The road was at first empty of all but the two figures, but soon straggling passengers joined in the chase, and in the cry, 'Stop thief!' and at a sharp turn in the road he was captured by a constable, who happened to be sauntering leisurely along, and met him full in the face. In the struggle which ensued, the lad threw away the purse, and Carry coming up, joyfully claimed it, and took possession of her property. But she was not allowed to retain it, the constable informing her that in the

meantime he must take charge of the stolen goods, and that she must accompany him to the town, and lay her complaint before a magistrate; and as she had no bonnet, he went home with her in the first place, keeping fast hold of the thief, and followed by a tail of men, women, and children, eager to see the end of the fun.

They all waited at the garden gate whilst Carry ran into the house to dress, and when she re-appeared in her bonnet and shawl, they raised a shout in her honour; and though somewhat abashed at the conspicuous position she held in the procession, she marched bravely along by the constable's side, virtuously proud, and with little if any pity in her heart for the prisoner on the man's other side, who was being pulled along roughly enough.

Arrived at their destination, Carry was questioned and cross-questioned by a pompous magistrate, who happened to be on the bench at the time, and was repeatedly complimented by him, not only on the clearness and correctness of her answers, but also on the spirit and courage she had displayed in the capture of the thief; and she blushed and took it all in good faith, never suspecting how much of his flattery was due to the fact of her being a very pretty girl, and the daughter of a wealthy, influential landowner.

On her return home, Carry was obliged to repeat

the story of her adventure to every servant in the house, who, as they gathered eagerly round their young mistress, and listened to the tale of her prowess, uttered exclamations of wonder and admiration, and paid her as many compliments as the magistrate had done, till she began to regard herself quite in the light of a heroine.

'Might there be as much as five shillings in the purse, Miss?' asked the old butler, speaking in an anxious tone, and for the first time.

'Oh, more than that, Jones!' replied Carry.

'Then he'll be hanged,' he said, sorrowfully shaking his head.

'Nonsense,' laughed Carry; 'as though a man would be hanged for stealing a few shillings!'

'The amount don't matter, if he came into the house and took it,' said Jones. 'I once knew a man hanged for stealing sevenpence-halfpenny, but that was highway robbery; it's the breaking of the law, and not the value of what is stolen. If a man steals the length of five shillings out of a house, it's hanging; less than five is transportation — that's the law,' he added, turning to the other servants, who were all gaping and listening and shaking their heads as he spoke, Maggie, the Scotch cook, ejaculating, 'Wae's me!' in a tone which went to Carry's heart.

'But I'll not allow him to be hanged,' she said,

turning away with great dignity; 'it was *my* purse he stole, Jones,' and she walked away, holding her head very high indeed, though she carried a small stone in her heart, of which she would gladly have been rid.

'Could Jones be right?' she thought; 'and was it possible that she might be the innocent cause of bringing a fellow-creature to the gallows?' And then, as she remembered the miserable, starved appearance of the culprit, a hitherto unfelt sensation of pity rose up within her, and she began to wonder how she could have been so anxious to recover her property. 'How I wish I had let him go,' she thought, as the recollection of Jones' words seemed to sink that stone still deeper in her heart. 'Hang him!' she murmured, 'oh, surely they would never be so cruel; papa would not allow them to hang a man for stealing my purse;' and as she remembered her father, Carry's spirits revived, and the weight at her heart became perceptibly lighter. 'Papa will make it all right,' she said, as she went into the garden, humming a tune to keep up her courage. There she found her book, but, in the perturbed state of her mind, to resume her reading was out of the question, and making her way to the other end of the garden, she ascended a small hillock, on which a seat had been fixed round the trunk of a large tree,—a favourite resort of Carry's, for from it she could see her father enter the ferry-

boat, and watch him rowed across the river from the opposite side.

Her father was all the world to Carry Morgan; she was an only child, and her mother was dead, and he supplied the place of all she had lost so well, that she never knew of what she had been deprived in having neither mother nor sister nor brother. 'Papa' was everything to Carry; he was not only everything that was kind and loving and amiable, but all that was wise and powerful; and as she stood now looking anxiously out for him, shading her eyes with her outstretched palm, she never doubted that even as his affectionate heart would sympathize with hers in its trouble, so would his powerful will effect an escape for her from the difficulty in which she felt herself involved.

For all the triumph and *éclat* of her adventure had vanished like smoke before the terror inspired by the old servant's words, and she kept repeating to herself, 'Papa will make it all right;' and in her ignorance and simplicity she really believed that he had nothing to do but to go to the magistrate and obtain the release of the prisoner. 'And he may keep the purse,' she said to herself; 'he was a poor, miserable looking creature, and had more need of the money than I have;' and Carry began to take a benevolent interest in the thief, and to meditate the bestowal of an old coat of her father's to cover his rags.

'It is surely past his time,' she said, taking out her watch; but no, it wanted nearly half an hour, and had Carry been busy with her book or her work, the time might have appeared short instead of long; but she could neither read nor work, and she waited and watched and wearied, till, having unconsciously turned away her eyes for a few minutes, she saw, on looking again, that the boat was half-way across the ferry, and sprang joyfully to her feet. But there were two passengers, and she stood still for a moment, vexed and disappointed, as she recognised the gentleman who accompanied her father. 'Mr. Griffiths! how provoking!' she muttered; 'and I so wanted to talk to papa. He must be coming to dinner;' and though she evidently entertained no great liking for her visitor, the sight of him brought to Carry's recollection that her hair was tumbled and out of order, and that her dress altogether might be the better of a little re-arrangement; so, instead of running down to the landing-place to welcome her father, as she would have done had he been alone, she ran off to her room as fast as she could to dress for dinner.

Carry did not like Mr. Griffiths, a young curate who had recently come to the neighbourhood, and who, though he was always polite and gentlemanly, behaved towards the pretty young heiress in a manner which annoyed and irritated her, she knew not why. There was mock reverence in the very low bow he made to

her; a mocking light in his merry blue eyes as he listened with over respectful attention to her most trifling remarks, which made her often blush and stammer in the middle of a sentence, in spite of all her efforts to appear composed and unconscious. In that bow and that glance the curate meant to convey, 'I am poor and you are rich, Miss Carry Morgan, but don't suppose for a moment that I consider myself your inferior on that account; everybody sneaks and cringes to you for your wealth, but you are much mistaken if you imagine I am the man to follow their example.'

Poor Carry! the curate forgot that her circumstances were not of her own making, and, like many rash judging people, he concluded that she must be what in these circumstances she was most likely to become; he judged the effect sure because the cause was there. And all the time, Carry never thought of priding herself on her position; she had been born in it, and it came as naturally to her as poverty to others, and she accepted the homage which it undoubtedly brought her as her right, without inquiring into or analysing the motives which produced it. She behaved like a little queen, it is true, but the feeling which led to this was real and natural, and not assumed; and had she known that the curate thought she must be purse-proud because she was an heiress, nobody would have been more surprised than she; and had she suspected

that he thought it necessary to keep her humble by keeping up his own dignity and superiority, it is doubtful whether the discovery might not have been followed by a burst of laughter, subversive of the effect intended to be produced, so far as he was concerned. In her innocent unconsciousness, however, she was not likely to make the discovery, and the annoyance caused by his appearance now was only due to the fact that she was wearying to pour forth her tale to her father's sympathizing ear.

'I'll catch him before he gets down-stairs,' she thought, as she put the finishing touches to her toilette; but her eager haste hindered her speed, for straggling curls would rebel, and buttons refuse to be conquered under her tremulous fingers, and her father was half-way down-stairs before, excited and flustered, she overtook him, crying, 'Wait a moment, papa, I have something to tell you!'

'Nay, nay, Carry, not half a moment, whatever that may be; you forget how hungry I am—keep it till after dinner,' said her father, fondly kissing her forehead as she laid hold of him. 'Why were you not meeting me, darling?' and imprisoning her hand within his arm, he forced her to accompany him, all unwilling as she was to delay the communication of her intelligence.

'But, papa, if you only knew,' she was beginning; but he playfully silenced her by placing his hand over

her mouth, and she was impatiently pushing it away as they entered the dining-room and she encountered Mr. Griffiths' glance.

'How provoking for *you* to come here, this day of all days,' she thought as she shook hands with him.

'Saucy, spoiled child!' thought he, never doubting but that she had been begging some favour from her father, which had been refused.

'If *he* had not been here, I would have told papa all about it during dinner,' thought she.

'Self-willed girl, what a frown has gathered on her pretty face!' thought he, with a glance of unwilling admiration, as the young mistress of the house took her place at the head of the table with a troubled countenance, totally unconscious either of his censure or his admiration.

'I wonder how long he'll sit after dinner,' thought she; 'I can't tell papa till he is gone.'

But no sooner was the wine placed upon the table and Jones had left the apartment, than Mr. Morgan cried, 'Now for your news, Carry!'

Poor Carry! she was very unwilling to tell her tale in presence of the curate, and yet to refuse was, she felt, a plain hint that his presence was unacceptable, and therefore an ungracious, impolite act in a hostess to a guest; so she hesitated and blushed and looked appealingly to her father, who, all unconscious of the nature of the communication she wished to make,

waited provokingly patient for her to speak. But Mr. Griffiths was a young man who was always equal to the occasion, and he came to Carry's relief now, saying in a tone of mock gravity,

'I see Miss Morgan wishes to speak to you privately; I will step into the garden, and should my assistance be required, you will find me in the immediate vicinity;' and making a very low bow, he opened the window, stepped out, and closed the sash behind him.

'Nonsense!' cried Mr. Morgan, laughing heartily, as he sprang to his feet intending to call him back; but Carry sprang forward too, and catching hold of his arm before he had time to open the window, she burst into tears.

'My darling, what is the matter?' cried her father, startled and alarmed, for Carry was not a sentimental young lady, and seldom shed tears; 'tell me what it is—has anything happened?' he added, as Carry continued to sob. 'I thought you had some little bit of gossip to tell me, which there might be no harm in Griffiths hearing; he generally knows all the news of the neighbourhood before they reach us; but I see it is something of importance,—what is it, darling?'

Then Carry, conquering with an effort her emotion, poured forth her tale; and if she had feared that from the agitation she had displayed her father might overrate its importance, she found herself mistaken. Releasing her from his arms, without offering any of the

sympathy and consolation she had expected, he began to pace the floor of the room with hasty footsteps, his expressive countenance showing greater marks of discomposure than she had ever seen on it in her life before. The veins of his high forehead stood out full and prominent, looking very blue in the marble whiteness of the skin, whilst his lips quivered and twitched with strong emotion. He was a man of keen feelings, but it was unusual for him to make an outward display of them, and Carry's heart sank as she looked at him.

'Was what Jones said true, papa?' she timidly asked, after waiting in vain for him to speak.

'Quite true,' he replied, in a dry, hard tone.

'You'll get him off, papa?' she said next, after she had again waited for him to speak.

'If I can,' he said, in the same tone of voice. 'You had better tell Griffiths to come back,' he said, as he sat down again at the table, the image of distress and perplexity, the sight of the curate's half-empty glass recalling him to mind.

Poor Carry reluctantly obeyed. She was both frightened and disappointed,—disappointed because her father, her usually kind father, had not given her one word of sympathy, and frightened because she was sure he apprehended a dire conclusion to her adventure.

She opened the window and called out, in timid,

apologetic tones, 'Mr. Griffiths!' but the curate never moved. He was standing at a short distance with his hands behind his back, apparently deep in meditation; and though he heard his name quite distinctly, it suited his mood to take no notice. The time had seemed very short to Mr. Morgan and Carry, but very long to him, and had it not been that his hat was within doors, he would have set off in high dudgeon, vowing never again to set foot within a mansion, the master and mistress of which had treated him with such disrespect; so, though he heard Carry's gentle call, he solaced his wounded feelings by pretending not to hear, and she was obliged to step out and come close to him before he condescended to take the slightest notice.

'Beg pardon, Mr. Griffiths,' she said very humbly, as he started and turned round. He had intended to be very haughty and dignified, but the sight of the girl's flushed, tear-stained face caused a sudden revulsion of feeling, and an eager desire to take her part against her father, and all the world if need be, took possession of him.

'Can I do anything to help you?' he whispered kindly, pausing for a moment ere he crossed the sill of the open window.

Now Carry had confidently expected help from her father, but that Mr. Griffiths would help her had never once crossed her mind, and the mortification she had

experienced in not getting what she had expected made her catch eagerly at the hope of assistance from a quarter from which she had expected nothing. A bright light beamed from her eyes, and a grateful smile played on her lips, as she clasped her hands and looked up in the curate's pitying face. It was all the answer she gave him, but it was enough to enlist him as a zealous champion in her cause, ignorant as he was of what might be required of him.

'Come away, Mr. Griffiths, and finish your wine; we have been shamefully uncourteous to-day,' said Mr. Morgan, with a feeble attempt at a laugh.

The curate took the apology as his right, and sat down, wondering what was to be said now. But Mr. Morgan sat and sipped his wine and said nothing; and Carry, who had supposed he would tell the circumstances to their guest, and obtain his advice and assistance, sat miserably self-conscious, aware that she had committed herself, and that politeness demanded an explanation. But Mr. Griffiths saw and pitied her confusion, and commenced a conversation with her father, without making the slightest allusion to his brief exclusion from the company; plunging, however, by chance, into the midst of the very subject which of all others he would have avoided had he known the cause of her distress.

'What a number of executions we have had this year,' he carelessly remarked; 'it is sickening to read

the account of them—and for such small offences, too. Surely there is great need for reform in our criminal code.'

'Yes,' replied Mr. Morgan, with something like a shudder; 'it is a bloody code, and should be reformed.'

'I forget how many were hanged in London at the Old Bailey last Monday morning,' continued the curate, totally unconscious of the pain he was inflicting, 'and there was only one murderer amongst them. It is enough to make people keep quiet when they are robbed, for fear of being the means of sending a fellow-creature to the gallows. I am too poor to be able to say in sincerity, "Who steals my purse steals trash," but even I would not like to catch a thief,—I would feel something like committing murder, I think, if I did;' and the curate turned to Carry, and smiled a smile full of the pride of poverty, looking as though he had said a good thing, and expected applause.

But he started in painful surprise as he caught the agonized expression of the eyes, dilated with horror, which she had fixed upon his face, her clasped hands being convulsively pressed upon her bosom, as though to stay the beating of her heart; and he turned to her father, ejaculating, 'What is it? What have I said to hurt her?'

Then Mr. Morgan, obliged to explain, told how his daughter had that day been robbed, and how she had run after and captured the thief, who was now in

custody. He told the facts barely and simply, evidently thinking the matter too serious to admit of amplification; and as the young man listened, his heart filled with pity, not for the captured thief, but for Carry. Not forgetful of her silent appeal for help, he resolved to make light of the matter, and could have bit out his tongue as he remembered how he must have aggravated the misery the poor girl was evidently suffering.

So he laughed heartily at the whole affair; wished he had only been in the way to assist in the capture of the thief; hinted that though the fellow richly deserved to be punished, he would leave no stone unturned to obtain his release; and ended by reciting 'John Gilpin,' as somewhat *apropos* to the subject, so comically as to make Mr. Morgan laugh in spite of himself, and was rewarded by seeing the colour return to Carry's face, and her eyes bright and sparkling; and having finished his recitation, he was lying back in his chair to laugh too, when the door opened, and 'Mr. Lewis' was announced.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAGISTRATE.

MR. LEWIS was the magistrate before whom the thief had been taken, and his appearance on the scene quenched the mirth of the company, and suddenly quieted their laughter. He came to talk the matter over with Mr. Morgan, and to compliment Carry anew on the courage and bravery she had displayed; and he took his seat at the table with the easy assurance of a man sure of a hearty welcome.

But though Mr. Morgan tried hard to exercise his usual hospitality in a proper, orthodox manner, his replies were dry and constrained; and had not the visitor been wrapped up in a sense of his own dignity and importance, he must have felt that his presence was undesired and unwelcome. But he sat and talked of 'the affair' with his usual pomposity, praised Carry and her father's wine in one breath, and provoked and irritated the curate by relating the circumstances to

him, as though it had been left to him to inform him of them.

Carry listened, confused and bewildered, as she heard him dilate on the delinquency of the thief, on the fortunate circumstance of his speedy capture, and the no less fortunate circumstance of the fact that he happened to be on the bench at the very time when the constable and Carry arrived with their prisoner. 'Saving you much delay and trouble, Miss Morgan,' he remarked, with a bow which implied that some gratitude was due from her to him on that account. He also congratulated himself, the company, and, indeed, society in general, on the capture of the criminal in the very act, 'purse in hand,' he said, with a wave of *his* hand, 'thereby making his conviction easy and his punishment sure.'

Carry listened with a throbbing heart; she could have put her fingers in her ears to escape the cold, measured accents in which he spoke of what concerned her so deeply; and when he paused for a moment to sip his wine, she cried out: 'But I don't want him punished! Oh, Mr. Lewis, can't you let him off?'

'My dear young lady!' he ejaculated, considerably surprised and flattered at the same time by an appeal which took it for granted that he had it in his power to release the prisoner.

'Such a small thing,' pleaded Carry; 'only a few shillings!'

Mr. Lewis cleared his throat. 'My dear Miss Morgan,' he began, speaking with the condescending tone of superior wisdom, 'you have a kind heart, and your desire to let the thief off is just what might have been expected from you; but the smallness of the theft makes no difference in the crime. If a man breaks the law, he *must* suffer the penalty.'

'Mr. Lewis, did you ever see a man hanged?' asked Mr. Morgan, in a dry, hoarse tone of voice, which made them all start involuntarily.

'Certainly, certainly,' said the magistrate. 'You must know, my dear sir, that I have often attended executions in my official capacity; a person in a position like mine has many disagreeable duties to perform, and'—

'And you can speak thus coolly of a man being hanged for stealing a few shillings?' interrupted Mr. Morgan, every nerve quivering in his expressive countenance.

'My dear sir!' cried the magistrate, staring at him in unfeigned amazement, 'you would surely never advocate the abolition of the punishment of crime? Why, if thieves were allowed to steal with impunity, no man could call his property his own.'

'Many steal with impunity now, in consequence of the severity of the punishment,' replied Mr. Morgan. 'I for one have often suffered loss, rather than prose-

cute the thief, and be the means of bringing a fellow-creature to the gallows. I once saw a man hanged when I was a mere boy,' he continued, speaking in tones of suppressed emotion, 'and it made an impression on me which I have never forgotten. What his crime was I know not, but I think I see him yet,—a fine, stalwart figure in the prime of life, taking his last look of the sky above his head, and the world around him, ere the rope was put round his neck which was to strangle him like a dog. I felt that, had I been in his place, I would have fought like a tiger for my life; as it was, I could have sprung on the scaffold, I believe, and done battle with the executioner, had the man made the slightest resistance himself; but the numbness of despair had paralysed him, I suppose, and he submitted without the slightest apparent effort to release himself.'

'Of course he could not help himself,' said Mr. Lewis, 'and it would have done him no good; and, pardon me, sir, the idea of resisting the last sentence of the law was a truly boyish one. Tried, found guilty, and condemned to die, a man has nothing to do but to submit. He should have remembered the penalty when he committed the crime; it is too late when he is on the gallows, sir, too late.'

'Would you be willing to hang a man yourself, Mr. Lewis?' asked the curate, who had hitherto taken no part in the conversation.

'Sir!' said the magistrate, starting and staring at him with wide open eyes.

'I asked if you would be willing to hang a man yourself,' repeated the curate, speaking in a higher key, as though the other had not heard him the first time.

'Sir!' was again all the reply the magistrate could command.

'You see,' continued the curate with provoking coolness, and ignoring the other's astonishment, 'though a thing may be disagreeable and repulsive, if it be a right and proper thing to do, and a thing we expect another to undertake, we ought to be willing to perform it ourselves should no other be forthcoming for the purpose. I know that in some towns a law prevails which holds the youngest or last appointed magistrate liable to perform the office of executioner, should no other hangman be forthcoming. I don't know if it is the case here, but if it is, I would not like to be the youngest magistrate.'

'Nonsense!' cried Mr. Lewis, recovering his composure; 'that is an extreme case, and one not likely to occur.'

'Yes,' persisted the curate; 'but suppose it did happen, would you be willing to act the hangman?'

'No, I would not!' roared Mr. Lewis, fairly out of temper.

'Then the law would become null and void, and the

"'But I don't object,' he added, with a pompous wave of the hand."
—*Carry Morgan*, page 28.

criminal would escape its penalty,' said the curate. 'It would not be a pleasant job,' he added meditatively; 'but I don't see how we can escape a duty which we expect another to perform.'

'I'll send for you when the hangman rebels,' said Mr. Lewis, with a slight sneer.

'Nay, my good sir,' said Mr. Griffiths, 'you must except *me*, for I would never ask another to do it.'

'Do you mean to say you would not hang a man for murder?' asked Mr. Lewis.

'No, I would not,' said the curate.

'What! do you deny the authority of the Bible?' said Mr. Lewis.

'Old Testament Jewish laws are not binding on Gentile Christians,' said the curate; 'it's not an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth now, but to do to others what we would wish them to do to us.'

'Do you call the ten commandments a Jewish law?' blustered Mr. Lewis.

'No,' said the curate; 'the ten commandments are clearly comprehended in the two great laws of the New Testament, — love to God, and love to our neighbour.'

'If you come to theology, I am done with you,' said the magistrate, with a forced laugh. 'What do *you* think of capital punishment?' he added, turning to Mr. Morgan.

'I wish I could see it as Mr. Griffiths does,' said

Mr. Morgan; 'but I think the command, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," was given before any distinction of Jew and Gentile.'

'If you go back to the days of Noah for a law, we may set up our altars and offer sacrifices,' said the curate. 'We find some examples even in the New Testament which we completely ignore in these latter days; take everything literally, and we must have all things common, and decide matters by lot.'

'Sir, you are heterodox,' cried the magistrate; 'such sentiments are subversive of religion and law.'

'But,' hastily interposed Mr. Morgan, 'though I do not yet see the expediency of abolishing capital punishment in the case of murder, I have no doubt of the great necessity for its abolition for minor offences.'

'But, my dear sir,' said the magistrate, 'as the law stands, think of the expense the country is saved; condemn a man to imprisonment or transportation, and *we* have to keep him to the end of his days. No, no; hanging is at once a safer and more economical plan,' and he looked round the company and smiled, as though he had said a good thing.

An ejaculation of surprise and horror from both Carry and the curate was all the applause he received, Carry adding in indignant tones, 'I never thought you could be so cruel!' and, like the mean man he was,

he retaliated by saying, 'If you did not wish the thief punished, you should not have run so fast after him.'

'Oh, I never thought he would be hanged!' she cried, sobbing bitterly.

'Carry, darling!' whispered her father, soothing and caressing her.

'He's not hanged yet,' said the curate, who had a strong desire to kick the magistrate out of the room; 'and he won't be, if I can help it,' he added in a low tone; which, however, Mr. Lewis heard, and taking the remark as a challenge, he said in a still lower tone, which nobody heard but Mr. Griffiths, 'You'll not get him off if I can help it.'

The magistrate was at that moment very uncomfortable; not that he was ashamed of the sentiments he had uttered, but to be the cause of pretty Carry Morgan's tears was, to say the least of it, rather awkward,—Carry whom he admired so much, both for her wealth and beauty. And now he had wounded and offended the very girl whom of all others he was most anxious to flatter and please; in the presence, too, of that handsome young curate, whom he thought at that moment the most impertinent young fellow he had ever met. Mr. Griffiths was ten years his junior, and this fact alone gave him, he thought, an advantage over him; for he was jealous of the curate, who, too poor and too proud ever to dream of winning the

heiress, was happily totally unconscious of the existence of any such feeling in the other's mind, furious as he was at the magistrate for being the cause of her tears.

So Mr. Lewis silently and sulkily sipped his wine, whilst Mr. Morgan succeeded in soothing and quieting Carry; and Mr. Griffiths, with his usual tact, resumed the conversation as though nothing disagreeable had occurred to interrupt it.

'I have been much shocked since I came here,' he remarked, 'to find the people so ignorant. Of all the couples I have married, only two were able to sign their names; and how can it be otherwise, when such scanty provision is made for instructing the lower classes? All the education many of them get is what they receive at the Sunday school. I must show you the marriage registry-book some day, Miss Morgan, there are so many crosses in it. I got quite a start when I first opened it. I thought some boy had got hold of it and been amusing himself as we used to do on our slates at school.'

A low laugh from Carry rewarded the curate for his endeavour to divert her thoughts, and roused the magistrate to opposition.

'It is as bad, if not worse, in England,' he said.

'It may be so, I was not brought into such close contact there with the working classes as I have been since I came here,' the curate quietly replied; 'but

that does not make the state of matters in Wales less deplorable.'

'*You* cannot judge,' said the magistrate scornfully. 'I suppose you know more of Latin and Greek than the language of the people?'

'Perhaps I do,' said the curate good-humouredly; 'but I am labouring to supply my deficiency, and have acquired no small acquaintance with your language since my appointment to my present curacy; but I often wish,' he said, turning again to Carry, 'that the Tower of Babel had never been built.'

Again Carry laughed, and again the magistrate fumed.

'Sir!' he was beginning, but the curate carried on.

'I had no idea, when I first came,' he said, 'that Welsh was so generally spoken, for you are all so good at the English that I never imagined you could be equally good at the Welsh. They spoke English fluently at every inn I lodged at, and in all the visits I paid I never heard a word of Welsh, so that it was some time before I discovered that Welsh was really and truly your mother tongue, and the other an acquired language. I wish from the bottom of my heart the people could read and write it as well as speak it.'

'Ours is a language of great antiquity,' said the magistrate, 'and is well worth the studying; Welsh is none of your mushroom tongues. Once we had laws of our own too, and a separate independent jurisdic-

tion; but I don't object,' he added, with a pompous wave of the hand, 'I don't object to the assimilation of our laws to those of England,—both countries may derive benefit from it. You are far behind us in some things,' he added, turning to the curate, who, honestly desirous not to quarrel, was rather nonplussed by the remark; and, catching a roguish twinkle in Carry's eye, a smile passed between them, which was seen and remembered by the magistrate, who soon after took his departure.

Then the curate lay back in his chair, and laughed as heartily as he had done at John Gilpin; and Carry laughed too, and Mr. Morgan, pleased to see her with recovered spirits, smiled and bit his lip, and abstained from reproving her for what, true gentleman as he was, he felt to be a breach of the laws of hospitality.

'How he stared when I asked him if he could hang a man,' laughed Mr. Griffiths; but the moment the words were uttered, he wished them unspoken, for a look of utter misery returned to Carry's face, and he too was glad to make his escape as soon as possible.

Then Carry and her father were left alone. 'Oh, papa!' was all she could say.

'It's an unfortunate business, my dear,' he replied, fondly stroking her cheek, 'but may not turn out so bad as we fear. Many a thief has been got off before now, and we will do our best for the poor

wretch. I'm sure I wish he had stolen from anybody but my Carry.'

'But, papa, if *we* don't want him punished, can't they let him off?' asked Carry.

'I'm afraid not, now he is in the hands of justice, my love,' said her father. 'If you had not been taken before a magistrate, and given your evidence, we might have let him off, but now it is out of our hands, and, I fear, out of our power to refuse to prosecute; and Lewis is such a pompous fool, proud of being vested with a little brief authority, that I suspect, even though he had the power to wink at the offence, he would want the will. But cheer up, darling,' he added, 'it may not be so bad after all. I will manage, if it comes to a trial, that he gets the best legal counsel; and there are many quirks and turns in the law, of which a clever lawyer can make use on behalf of a client.'

Carry kissed her father with a grateful heart, and took courage, but Mr. Morgan was far from feeling the confidence with which he inspired his daughter; and to a refined, sensitive spirit like his, the thought of her appearing as chief witness in the case, exposed to the rude stare of the miscellaneous crowd who attended jury trials, was no small portion of the dismay and chagrin with which he regarded the affair.

'How I wish I had not run after him!' sighed Carry,

after a minute's silence, during which she had been wearily repeating in her mind the occurrences of the day, and wishing she had done this, or had not done that.

'You did what was quite natural in the circumstances,' said her father kindly. 'It is the severity of our laws that is at fault; and so long as stealing is a capital crime, thieves will, in many instances, escape with impunity.'

'But, papa,' said Carry, with a slight hesitation in her manner, 'is it right to let them escape?'

'No,' said her father; 'but it seems to me the least of two evils. It is an awful thought to be the means of hurling a fellow-creature into eternity, and I am not sure but that Mr. Griffiths is right in going the whole length, and disapproving of capital punishment even in the case of murder; though it may be more expensive to maintain the criminal for the rest of his days,' he added, with a faint smile.

'Oh, papa, Mr. Lewis is a horrid man,' said Carry, with a shudder.

'He is puffed up with the idea of the dignity of a magistrate,' said her father; 'and having a vulgar, ignorant mind, he is proud of any little knowledge he has, and is another proof that those who know the least are the most vain of the little they do know. But we must speak him fair, Carry, and be civil to him,—we may need both his assistance and advice.'

Mr. Morgan had seen the curate and Carry smiling at the magistrate, and knowing that, from the nature of the man, nothing would offend him more than to be laughed at, he thought it wise to put her on her guard, and she was not slow to take the hint.

'I will take care, papa,' she cried eagerly; 'I will be very polite and respectful, and all that;' and Carry wished from the bottom of her heart that she had shown Mr. Lewis more attention that afternoon.

And so it was, that when they next met, she charmed the magistrate by the respectful deference of her manner, and the patience with which she listened to his florid details of all the technicalities of 'the case,' as he called it; a deportment which he flattered himself was entirely due to her appreciation of his merits, and from which he drew the most flattering auguries for the future.

CHAPTER III.

THE QUAKER.

IN due time the thief was committed for trial at the next assizes, in spite of all Mr. Morgan's efforts to procure his release. These efforts were completely frustrated by Mr. Lewis, who threw every possible obstacle in the way of their success; but Mr. Morgan lived in hope of being able to get the last sentence of the law commuted should it be passed upon him, a consummation which he earnestly desired to avert.

'At all events the jury must surely recommend him to mercy,' he remarked to Carry on the evening of his final committal to gaol; 'the circumstances of the case demand it; it is the poor fellow's first offence, and he seems a quiet, well-dispositioned youth. He has none of the effrontery of a hardened criminal, and we know not how he may have been tempted, or what we might have done ourselves, exposed to the same temptations. I understand he can neither read nor write.'

'Oh dear, oh dear!' sobbed Carry, 'they will surely never hang him.'

'I don't think they will,' said her father in a cheerful tone; 'if that fool Lewis had only been out of the road,' he muttered.

'Papa,' said Carry, after a thoughtful pause, during which she had been struggling against the reluctance she felt to the proposal she was herself about to make, 'I think I should go and visit the poor fellow, and take something to him; he looked very ragged and starved.'

'A good idea,' said her father, catching at anything likely to interest and occupy her during a time of suspense, which he himself felt would be almost unbearable; 'I will speak to Lewis about it to-morrow. He can't refuse you admission, though no doubt he will make a fuss and a merit of it.'

Mr. Morgan's usually serene temper had been much tried by the magistrate's behaviour during the foregoing days, and his keen appreciation of the gravity of the case, natural to a refined, sensitive nature, made him peculiarly alive to the vain, silly pleasure which the other seemed to take in wielding the power he possessed; but anxiety for the interests of the prisoner induced him to conceal from the object of it the contempt he could not help feeling.

'I wish you had been a magistrate instead of Mr. Lewis,' sighed Carry.

'I'm glad I am not,' said her father; 'duty might have forced me to act opposite to the dictates of my heart. Law and mercy, ay, and justice too, are too often opposed to each other.'

Next day with a beating heart Carry accompanied her father to the gaol; she could have dispensed with the company of Mr. Lewis, but he was officiously attentive and not to be got rid of. He made a great show of doubt and difficulty in granting permission to visit the prisoner, and looked so pompously silly, that had not Carry been so anxious and heart-sick, she might have laughed heartily at him. But she bore all the fuss he made very patiently, and even gave her father a warning glance when she saw him losing patience with the important magistrate. But once within the prison and in the prisoner's cell, Carry forgot all in her interest in the thief. The glance of abject terror with which he recognised in her his pursuer, his wretched, starved appearance, the absence of all signs of ferocity in his countenance, and the gentleness of his tones whilst replying to the harsh interrogatories of the magistrate, filled her heart with pity and her eyes with tears.

'I was so hungry,' he said, in reply to a kind question of Mr. Morgan's, as to what had induced him to commit the offence for which he was in prison; and Carry hastily produced from her basket the food and dainties with which she had provided herself.

The delighted surprise with which he received them touched her still more, and the change of expression from fear to gratitude, with which he now regarded her, was in itself no small pleasure to her; and she could have taken Mr. Lewis by the shoulders and pushed him out of the cell, as he said in pompous, condescending tones:

'Young man, you are much indebted to this young lady, who, notwithstanding the injury you have done her, is so very kind as not only to visit you in this place, but to bring you that nice fowl and white bread, not to mention the cheese and sweet cakes, of which, however, I would not advise you to eat much; indeed, I would not, but for her sake, allow you to have any of them, and am not quite sure if I am doing right in thus relaxing the rules of prison discipline,—bread and water would be more suitable fare, both for your digestion and your crime.'

The young man hung his head and looked wistfully at Carry, who, anxious to rid him of Mr. Lewis' presence, that he might enjoy the good things she had brought him, proposed to her father to terminate their visit.

'Here is a story-book I brought to amuse you,' she said, handing him a book as they were leaving the cell. But the lad only stared at it and made no approach to take it, which gave Mr. Lewis a grand opportunity to interfere.

'He can't read,' he said scornfully.

'Oh, I forgot,' said Carry, in a tone of anguish, as she hastily deposited her book once more in the basket, and took her father's arm, anxious to relieve the prisoner and be herself relieved of Mr. Lewis' presence.

But Mr. Lewis was not so easily got rid of; he accompanied them on their way home, annoying Carry by pouring into her ears a string of fulsome compliments as to her benevolence and the kindness and forgiveness which she had shown to the prisoner, —an annoyance which she was fain to hide, as she remembered her father's injunctions; so she smiled, and tried to look pleased, and again Mr. Lewis left her highly flattered, though at the same time somewhat mortified that neither father nor daughter gave the slightest hint of his accompanying them into the house.

'Oh, papa, it's a dreadful thing not to be able to read,' remarked Carry, as she and her father sat together that evening.

'Dreadful,' Mr. Morgan said, who, deep in meditation, heard her words without attaching any particular meaning to them. He held a book in his hand, but he was not reading; the visit to the prisoner had affected him even more than Carry. Not that the lad's appearance had much in it to interest him, but Mr. Morgan looked on him as the victim of a cruel legis-

lation, and that his daughter should have been the means of exposing him to its vengeance was a sore aggravation of the facts of the case. But his was a truly pious mind; and painful as the thought of the thief's probable ignominious death could not but be to him, the remembrance that the sudden cutting short of his life would bring him face to face with unseen realities, sank for a time the lesser evil into the shade.

'Papa,' said Carry again, 'do you think I might teach him to read?'

'I am afraid it would be up-hill work, my love,' said her father, rousing himself from his abstraction; 'and should our efforts to save him prove ineffectual, it would be lost labour both to you and him. But you can try, and if he prove a good scholar, and his life is saved, you will have conferred on him an inestimable boon; but in the doubtful nature of the case, you may do him more good by reading to him, and teaching him as you would a child. I must speak to Griffiths about giving him religious instruction,' he added.

'I am afraid he might not understand Mr. Griffiths' Welsh,' said Carry.

'Well, you can accompany him, and act as interpreter,' said her father. 'Religious instruction he must have,—he *must* make his peace with God; that, I believe, is the formula customary in such cases.'

Mr. Morgan spoke with a bitterness unusual to him, and Carry looked at him with surprise, the sentiment and the tone in which it was conveyed appeared so contrary to all she was familiar with as coming from his lips.

'What do you mean, papa?' she ejaculated.

'When sentence of death is passed upon a criminal,' explained her father, 'it is customary for the judge to exhort him to occupy his few remaining days in making his "peace with God,"—finishing off with a short sermon, in fact; but we can't expect judges to preach evangelically.'

'True, friend, true,' said a melodious voice, which made both father and daughter start to their feet.

'John Darge!' cried Mr. Morgan, grasping the speaker's hand with warm delight, and shaking it repeatedly,—'John Darge! where have you dropped from?'

'Not from the moon,' said the stranger, who was a large, placid-looking man, clad in Quaker garb; 'I found thy door open, and walked in unannounced, in nick of time to hear thee sighing over the deficiency of preaching judges. Is this thy daughter?' he asked, turning a pair of kindly grey eyes on Carry. 'I need not ask, she is so like thyself,' he added, taking Carry's hand in his, and saluting her in regular fatherly fashion. 'She looks sad. Art thou in trouble?' he said, turning to her father.

'Sit down here, in the easy chair, John,' cried Mr. Morgan, 'and let us throw trouble to the winds in the meantime. Carry, go and hurry the supper,' he said, as he forced the bulky Quaker into the chair he had pulled forward for him; 'and, Carry, see that the spare bed-room is made comfortable.'

'Nay, friend,' interrupted the Quaker.

'None of your nays,' interrupted Mr. Morgan in turn; 'it's not so often I see you, and now I have got you, I'll keep you; why, you walked into my house like a thief,' and he patted him on the back, and shook hands with him again, moving restlessly round him, for all the world like a happy schoolboy.

Carry had often heard of Mr. Darge as an old college companion of her father's, whom she had never seen, but of whom he always spoke with both love and reverence. But, prepared as she was to like this dear unknown friend of her father's, she was surprised at the effect of his appearance upon him. When she returned to the sitting-room, all traces of the troubled expression which had clouded Mr. Morgan's countenance ever since the capture of the thief, had vanished as though by magic; and as he and Mr. Darge laughed merrily at the recollection of some of their boyish exploits, she thought her father looked at least ten years younger, and she felt as though she had been dreaming as she saw how completely he seemed to

have banished all thoughts of the trouble which had for days absorbed every other consideration. And an injured, jealous feeling crept into her mind as she remembered how much her own vexation had been increased by the knowledge that she had caused so much trouble to her father.

'And he spoke of Mr. Darge coming in like a thief,' she said to herself, 'just as though he had forgotten all about it, or did not care any more;' and as the two old friends continued to laugh and talk, Carry felt both miserable and angry.

'Thy father always got his own way,' said Mr. Darge, turning to Carry; 'but I left my valise at the inn, and'—

A violent ringing at the bell stopped further remonstrance, and the servant who appeared in answer to the summons was ordered by Mr. Morgan to fetch Mr. Darge's luggage immediately.

'Thou seest how it is,' said Mr. Darge, smiling to Carry, who, disappointed at his remaining, yet felt ashamed at the inhospitable feeling, and constrained to like the benevolent looking stranger almost against her will. Before supper was over, she, too, felt her spirits rise; and though she had not got quit of the load at her heart, it assuredly felt lighter.

Neither had Mr. Darge forgotten it. He had been watching with tender interest all the changes on the

girl's countenance, and as soon as the servant left the room he said kindly, 'Now, tell me why thou looked so sad when I came in?'

Carry blushed and hesitated, and looked at her father, who, to her surprise, immediately explained all the circumstances of the case, with an anxiety and eagerness which showed it had lost none of its interest for him.

'If any man in England can help us, it is you, John Darge,' he said, as he finished his tale; 'you, who are foremost in every good cause, first in every good work. Why, your very name carries weight with it; and in this case you would truly work *con amore*, for capital punishment is opposed to all your principles, and is abhorrent to the benevolence of your nature. I have often heard you lament the awful severity of our criminal code.'

'True, friend, true,' replied Mr. Darge; 'the laws of our country, as our great Romilly says, may indeed be said to be written in blood. Should sentence of death be passed upon the poor fellow, you may depend upon me straining every nerve to procure a respite.'

'I knew you could help us,' said Mr. Morgan with a sigh of relief; 'Carry, darling, we have found a friend in need.'

'Nay, friend, I would not have her hopes raised,' said Mr. Darge; 'I can only promise to do my best.

Knowest thou the name of the judge who comes at this term?'

'No; I have not learned it yet,' replied Mr. Morgan.

'Much depends upon the judge,' continued Mr. Darge. 'There are, as thou knowest, merciful and unmerciful judges; and the sentences are often very unequal. I remember a case in which two men committed a crime in company. One was caught, but the other escaped; the former was tried, and received a lenient sentence, on hearing which, the other, expecting the same lenity, delivered himself up; but he was tried before another judge, and though his guilt was the same as that of his accomplice, his sentence was severe indeed compared with that passed upon the other.'

'That was not fair,' said Carry.

'Well,' said Mr. Morgan with a smile, 'perhaps the unfairness was on the lenient side; the judge who passed the hard sentence might only be doing his duty in respecting the law, against the dictates of his own heart.'

'I must take part with thy daughter there,' said Mr. Darge, 'for I know that judge to be severe and unmerciful. I once had occasion to appeal to him on behalf of a poor fellow sentenced to death for a trifling robbery, and he refused to exert the influence he possessed, alleging as an excuse that no witnesses

had been produced to testify to the previous good character of the prisoner.'

'And was the man hanged?' gasped Carry.

'He was,' Mr. Darge sadly replied.

'Then he was hanged for not having a good character,' said Carry indignantly, 'and not for the crime for which he was condemned!'

'If thou hadst been a boy, I would have counselled thy father to make a lawyer of thee,' said Mr. Darge, staring at the girl, with an unfeigned expression of amazement, which sent her father into a hearty fit of laughter, and brought the tears into Carry's eyes.

'I wonder you can laugh, papa!' she said, keeping them back with difficulty; 'our thief may be hanged for the very same reason. I wonder if we could get any witnesses to prove former good character for him?'

'We can try,' said her father, recovering his breath and his gravity; 'and if it be true that it is his first offence, it may not be very difficult; and with *you*, John Darge, enlisted in our cause, we will not despair,' he added.

'I certainly will do all I can,' replied Mr. Darge, 'but at the present time it may be very difficult; few judges can be persuaded to interfere on behalf of a criminal just now, on account of the prevailing opinion that the *certainty* of punishment is more

effectual in deterring men from crime even than its *severity*. But keep up thy heart, dear child, all may yet be well,' he added, as Carry bade him good-night with a grateful heart.

On the stairs she met Jones, and having a keen recollection of his speech on the day of the capture of the thief, she thought it might be well to enlighten him as to the new state of matters.

'It's all right now, Jones,' she said condescendingly; 'the Quaker gentleman who arrived to-night has, papa says, a great deal of influence, and he has promised to get the thief off.'

Jones scratched his head and looked doubtful.

'It's quite true,' said Carry confidently. 'It all depends upon the judge, he says; but if the judge should be a cruel one, Mr. Darge will help us to get him off.'

'If it depends upon the judge,' said Jones, 'the thief has small chance, for I heard to-day that Judge Peffers is to sit this assize, and they say that he is the most bloodthirsty wretch that ever wore a gown and wig.'

Poor Carry's newly raised hopes experienced a sudden check as she listened to this speech.

'Ah, Jones!' she sighed, returning to the old grievance, 'how I wish I had not run after him!'

'Well, I don't know, Miss,' replied Jones, anxious to

be consolatory, 'perhaps it's better as it is, for they say it is his first offence; now, if you had not caught him, he might have gone on from bad to worse, and been hanged for murder in the end; and you know, Miss, it's always better to be hanged for thieving than for murder.'

This view of the case did not prove quite so consoling to Carry as Jones seemed to expect. 'Jones,' she said, 'what did you say was the judge's name?'

'Peffers, Judge Peffers,' he replied; and then, to his great surprise, she turned away, and without another word ran down-stairs again. Her father and Mr. Darge were no less surprised at her sudden reappearance in the dining-room, where they were still sitting at the supper-table.

'Papa,' she cried, 'it's Judge Peffers!'

'And who is Judge Peffers, and what have we to do with him?' asked her father, still more surprised at this abrupt announcement.

'He is the judge who is to try our thief, and Jones says he is a bloodthirsty wretch,' continued Carry in breathless accents, scarcely conscious of a feeling of pride at being the first to ascertain and announce a piece of news, which she knew would be reckoned of great importance, and received with deep interest.

'Jones is not far wrong,' said Mr. Darge; 'Judge

Peffers is the very man who refused to interfere in the case I mentioned, but I hope he may be induced to take a more lenient view of this case.'

He spoke in a cheerful, hopeful tone, and Carry went off to bed once more with renewed hopes, and dreamt that she was a judge, wearing a black cap, and in the act of sentencing a man to be hanged for stealing a purse which she knew was at that moment safe in her own pocket,—a man whom she had never seen before, but who bore a remarkable likeness to John Darge, and who was of course innocent of the crime for which she was sending him to the gallows.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRISONER.

WHEN Carry awoke next morning, she felt as though she were dreaming still. The facts of the case had recovered all their gravity in her eyes; and the recollection of her father's mirth on the previous evening, and the lightening of her own load which she had herself experienced, appeared, in the circumstances, strange and unnatural, and she felt confused and bewildered as to whether there was really cause for the dire apprehensions with which they had been tormenting themselves ever since the capture of the thief. But when she saw her father and John Darge, at the breakfast-table, gravely and anxiously consulting together as to the best means to be employed for getting up a petition should the prisoner receive sentence of death, she woke up to full consciousness that there was really no difference in the actual state of matters, and that the mirth and light-heartedness

of the evening before had only been one of those lulls in the storm sometimes experienced by people in affliction, which are perhaps salutary and necessary in relaxing for a time the constant strain on the mental cord. As to Mr. Darge, Carry did him the justice to allow, that though he had promised all the help in his power, he had never for a moment spoken lightly on the subject, though he could not be expected to take the personal interest in it which she and her father did.

It was painful to Carry now to hear them talking about details, as though the worst was sure to come to pass; and her heart beat fast as she listened to the instructions given by Mr. Darge to her father, even as though the prisoner was already tried and condemned. For Mr. Darge's time was precious, and though he had only a few hours to spend with his friend, he offered to occupy part of it in visiting the prisoner, and ascertaining from him any facts which might be used on his behalf.

'You have had much experience in visiting criminals,' said Mr. Morgan; 'are they in the habit of expressing themselves freely, or are they suspicious and reserved?'

'Much depends upon the natural disposition and the mental powers of which they may be possessed,' replied Mr. Darge. 'I have known criminals who, though they may at first have been sullen and defiant, have

melted by a kind word or two, conversed freely and frankly, and though destitute of the mere elements of education, have displayed reasoning powers of no mean order. I remember one case in particular of a man lying under sentence of death, who maintained that he was less guilty than his judges, for, whilst he had only been guilty of theft, they in executing him for such a trifling offence were, in the eye of God, guilty of murder.'

'He was quite right!' cried Carry, whose sympathies were naturally enlisted on the side of the thief.

'Perhaps he was,' said Mr. Darge, with a smile, 'at least I know I found it very difficult to answer his arguments; and the inequality and severity of our punishments have often proved a stumbling-block in the way of their receiving spiritual instruction. Considering themselves as injured, they have argued that in the new world they would be recompensed for their sufferings in this, and that they have received enough of punishment here for all the sins they have committed.'

'I don't think our thief will present any such difficulties,' said Mr. Morgan; 'he seems a simple, quiet fellow, with no such metaphysical nonsense about him to stand in the way of his receiving instruction.'

When Mr. Darge saw the thief, he thought Mr.

Morgan was right, but sighed over his deplorable ignorance,—an ignorance he deplored in the mass, as well as in this particular instance.

'"Tis education we need, dear friend,' he said, as he parted from Mr. Morgan. 'Were we to spend more on the children, the men and women would not cost us so much, putting the moral aspect of the question out of sight.'

'And how are we to crush into so many days, perhaps, what should have been the work of years?' said Mr. Morgan in a despairing tone.

'Do thy duty, friend, and thou shalt not lose thy reward,' said Mr. Darge; 'and I will do mine,' he added,—an assurance which, in parting from him, gave Mr. Morgan no small comfort; for he knew that to get John Darge enlisted in a cause was almost tantamount to its success.

After his departure, Mr. Morgan called for Mr. Griffiths, but finding him absent from home, left an invitation to dinner, saying he wished to see him on particular business.

Punctual to the hour the curate arrived, wondering what new phase the affair had assumed in which his help was required, and anxious to be of assistance to Mr. Morgan and Mr. Morgan's daughter. But when he heard what was expected from him, the young man's ardour suddenly cooled. Even the prospect of having Carry for an interpreter could not conquer his

dislike to an office rather peremptorily, he thought, imposed upon him.

'Would it not be better to go yourself?' he said, after a few moments' silence.

'Me!' said Mr. Morgan; 'I never thought of going. You are the proper person,—you are a minister.'

'Yes, I am a minister,' said the young man drily; 'but I am no priest to go and prepare a fellow-creature for death.'

'Do you not visit the dying amongst your own charge?' asked Mr. Morgan, still more surprised.

'Of course I do,' said the young man, 'and I look upon these visits as an important part of my duty; but I always try to disabuse their minds of any feeling of confidence in me as a minister. I speak to them as any Christian might do; but I think in this case you, who are the more experienced of the two, are the proper person.'

'My dear sir,' stammered Mr. Morgan, 'I never thought you would refuse. Surely you are not in earnest?'

'I am sorry to disappoint you,' said Mr. Griffiths quietly; 'but the duty is certainly yours. There will be no fear of him expecting anything from you as from a priest.'

The young man was perfectly sincere in the remarks he made; but he was conscious at the same time of a secret feeling of triumph, in being able thus to refuse

a command (or what his sensitive pride considered as a command) from a rich man, who, he was afraid, looked upon him as an inferior.

No such feeling existed in Mr. Morgan's mind, but the curate's refusal to do what he certainly considered fell to him naturally as his duty, irritated and annoyed him not a little, all the more so that the task was so coolly transferred to his own shoulders. Remonstrance he found useless; the curate stood his ground, and, to his surprise, Carry, on being appealed to, took Mr. Griffiths' part.

'I think you ought to go, papa,' she said, 'you know so well what to say; and then you speak Welsh so much better than Mr. Griffiths. And besides,' she added, blushing as she remembered that she had insinuated that her father was better qualified than the curate to impart the necessary instruction, 'besides, I think Mr. Griffiths is right about it being better not to be a minister. I know these ignorant people think a minister different from other people. I don't mean they are not better,' she added, stammering and blushing still more, 'but—but'—

'We know what you mean, Miss Morgan,' said the curate, pitying her embarrassment, and rather flattered that he was the cause of it; 'ministers should be holy, and set an example to others; but I, for one, repudiate the term "holy minister," and regret much the feeling which prevails among many

people that it is necessary to have a minister's prayer for a dying person. It is a relic of superstition which lingers pertinaciously amongst us.'

'But,' persisted Mr. Morgan, 'why not go to this poor fellow, not as a minister, but as a Christian?'

'I would never hesitate for a moment,' said the curate, 'did I not think I was taking your duty.'

'Papa, you know Mr. Darge is not a minister,' said Carry, 'and he visits the criminals in prison.'

'I am not John Darge,' said Mr. Morgan: 'but I shall think about it. There is no hurry; the lad is not even tried yet.'

'He was in a great hurry when he thought I was to go,' thought the curate, with a slight chuckle. 'Who is John Darge?' he asked, turning to Carry, nothing loath to turn the conversation; and Carry, glad to change the subject, eagerly explained to whom she had referred, eloquently dilating on the Quaker's benevolence, and the influence of which he was possessed, and which he had promised to exert, if necessary, on behalf of the thief.

'Ah, I know who you mean now,' said Mr. Griffiths. 'I have often heard of John Darge the Quaker; with him on our side, it will be strange if we don't prove more than a match for Lewis.'

'I hope no help will be required,' said Mr. Morgan, who was trying to make a compromise with his conscience, in postponing the religious instruction ques-

tion till the lad's fate was decided one way or other.

And in the end it was Carry alone who did her duty in the matter; Carry who went patiently to the prison day after day, to teach the thief to read, and who in her own humble, simple way did what she could to instruct him also. Her pupil was ignorant, but not stupid, and the progress he made was wonderful; but the time was short, and as the assizes drew near, Carry, who had begun to take pleasure in her work, and to be proud of the progress made by her pupil, felt her heart sink within her as she saw how impossible it was to crush the work of years into a few weeks; and she began to question the wisdom of the task she had undertaken, for even though his life were saved, of what use would the mere rudiments of learning be to him, placed in circumstances the most unfavourable for self-education, even were he so inclined? and if he were condemned to death, and all their efforts to save him proved unavailing, was it not a sham and a mockery to have occupied his last days in spelling and reading lessons? But give up Carry could not! The lighting up of the poor, pale, pinched face, as, punctual to the hour, she appeared, carrying on her arm her basket, stored with good things; the gratitude he had no words to express, but which she understood as well and perhaps better than if he had been able to give it eloquent expression, all made it impossible

for her to abandon him. Finding that her father shrank with strange reluctance from the task he had wished Mr. Griffiths to undertake, and which that gentleman had in turn imposed upon him, she, remembering her father's advice when she had first hinted her wish to teach the thief, resolved to occupy part of the time in reading to him.

Carry was fond of reading, and would have liked to amuse the prisoner by reading to him some of the stories which had interested and amused herself; but here, again, the shortness of the time staggered and distressed her, and she felt that the Bible and the Bible alone was the book for him. So every day Carry read a portion to him, without note or comment, and every day he listened with the respectful, grateful attention with which he heard every word which fell from her lips.

Carry's feelings during this period were of a peculiar kind. In the eye of the law, she was the injured party, but in consequence of the terribly disproportionate nature of the punishment due to the offence which the thief had committed, their respective positions were reversed, and it was Carry who felt like the offender, and who looked upon him as the injured party. Her visits to the prison were not unaccompanied by great self-denial, irrespective of the pain and anxiety which she experienced on behalf of the prisoner, for Mr. Lewis was always in the way, and

generally managed to meet her, either in coming or going. She could easily have managed to hurt his pride and get quit of him, but she remembered her father's warning, and schooled herself to hide her growing dislike for the man and his fulsome compliments, and even tried to coax him into taking her view of the thief's case. Nothing delighted Mr. Lewis more, and he would pretend to be half convinced, and compliment her anew on her benevolence and the cogency of her arguments, till poor Carry felt as though she were at her wits' end, mortified and ashamed at thus voluntarily submitting to his company and his flattery. Sometimes on these occasions they encountered Mr. Griffiths, and the expression of his countenance as he bowed and passed on raised an angry blush on Carry's face, increased by observing the glance of triumph with which the magistrate returned the curate's bow.

'Surely,' she thought, 'Mr. Griffiths cannot suppose that I like Mr. Lewis' company!'

The butler, too, was always in the way when Carry returned from the prison, to relieve her of her basket, and hear whatever she had to tell about the prisoner. He used all the freedom of an old retainer, whilst at the same time he worshipped the very ground his young mistress trod, and her kindness to the thief had raised her to a still higher niche in his esteem. It was Jones who packed Carry's basket with delicacies

coaxed from the cook, with whom he had a daily friendly altercation as to their destination.

'It's perfect nonsense, fattening the poor lad for the gallows,' she remarked one day as she closed the basket lid.

'He's not hanged yet,' retorted Jones, turning his back on her and marching off with Carry's burden. There was a look on his face which touched the woman's heart, and made her wish her words unspoken.

She and Jones had always been good friends; indeed, the comely cook was rather a favourite with him. She was a Scotchwoman, and her Doric sounded sweet to his ears; for Jones, too, was Scotch, though he kept the fact of his nationality a profound secret, and was particularly cross to any one who ventured to ask where he had been born.

'Maggie's a decent girl,' he used to say to himself; 'none of your light-headed hussies, that put their Bibles in their trunks on Sunday night and let them lie there till the next Sunday morning. Maggie's been well brought up and educated too; I believe she's the only woman servant in the house that can read and write.'

As for Maggie, she had a great respect for 'Maister Jones,' as she called him, who she thought was a *wise*-like man and an honour to the family. 'When he's dressed in black, and has his white neckcloth on and

his hair powthered, he might pass for a lord or a minister,' she would say; 'an' mair than one stranger's mistaken him for the maister of the house.'

When Jones arrived as usual next morning with Carry's basket, Maggie was particularly gracious, and even volunteered a custard for the prisoner.

'You must tell Miss Carry to carry the basket even, and to mind to bring back the crystal,' she said.

'Thank you, Maggie, I'll do that,' said the grateful Jones, not a little surprised at the aspect things had assumed.

'I'll wager ye he'll no' be hanged after a',' said Maggie, anxious to make up for her yesterday's blunder, which she saw had hurt the butler keenly, she knew not why, but supposed he was sensitive on the subject from sympathy with his young mistress.

'What will you wager?' said Jones, with all a man's keenness for a bet.

Maggie had spoken at random, and, unwilling to commit herself, fell back on the national resource in such circumstances: 'What will ye wager yoursel'?' she asked.

'I'll not wager anything,' said Jones; 'but I'll tell you what, Maggie, if he's hanged, I'll marry you.' Jones, like Maggie, spoke at random, but her indignant surprise brought him to his senses.

'You're no' blate!' she cried; 'some folks think a woman's to be had for the askin', but ye seem to think

she's to be had without any askin' at a'. My man, you're far wrong if ye think any woman would have ye, without her rights of courting,' and to Jones' great dismay, Maggie's eyes filled with tears of wounded pride.

'I'm sure, Maggie, I meant no offence,' he said. 'I suppose I should have said, If he's hanged, I'll ask ye to marry me;' and, glad to make his escape, he lifted his basket and retreated, leaving the cook at her wits' end.

She had 'kept company' more than once, but Maggie was difficult to please, and had as yet seen nobody 'worth her while.' That Jones should think of matrimony had never once occurred to her, still less that he would have spoken as though she would be ready to jump at a proposal from him; and then she was perplexed as to whether he was in jest or earnest, and perhaps the soreness she felt at her heart was more due to the fact that Jones could behave in such a manner, than from the wound her pride had received.

Next morning Jones found a supply of good things, but no Maggie to help to pack them, and it was now his turn to have a sore heart; and besides, he had a confused feeling that he had committed himself, and might, for aught he knew, be liable to a case for breach of promise.

'Who would have thought she would have taken

me up so sharp?' he muttered, as he loitered about, hoping Maggie might still appear; and having at last given up hope, he was in the act of departing, when Maggie did appear, looking very demure.

'I'm glad to see you, Maggie,' cried Jones; 'I was afraid I had offended you.'

'Na, na,' said Maggie, 'I never takes offence when none's intended, but I did think ye might have proposed in a *purliter* manner.' There was a twinkle in the cook's eye which at once made Jones feel foolish and yet relieved.

'I knew you could take a joke, Maggie,' he said.

'A joke!' said Maggie; 'na, na, Jones, ye must not let your modesty wrong ye. But I'll tell you what, there's always two at a wager: you've bet that if the puir laddie's hanged *you'll* marry *me*, now I'll bet that if he's no' hanged *I'll* marry *you*;' and having so delivered herself, Maggie marched off, choking with suppressed laughter, leaving Jones more perplexed than ever, though at the same time rather proud of Maggie's cleverness.

In the meantime, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Griffiths were not idle. They drew up a petition according to Mr. Darge's directions, and canvassed for signatures to be appended to it, whenever the trial was over. They spared no expense in respect to counsel, but failed to procure witnesses to testify to the previous good character of the prisoner; for he was a poor,

friendless waif, who had wandered from a distant part of the country, and none were forthcoming.

'Nevertheless,' wrote Mr. Darge, in reply to a despairing letter from Mr. Morgan, 'keep up thy heart, friend; think nothing too great to accomplish, no obstacle too small to be removed out of the way. If I may presume to advise in a matter which appertaineth to thy household arrangements, I would counsel thee to invite Judge Peffers to take up his abode with thee during the assizes. A private gentleman's house surpasses an inn so much in comfort, that, added to thy company and that of thy sweet daughter, it may have no small influence in leading him to take a merciful view of the case. Stroke and pat him, my friend; I have great faith in patting.'

Mr. Morgan took Mr. Darge's advice, and was in waiting for the arrival of the judge, who gratefully accepted his invitation, remarking, as he thanked him for his unexpected kindness, that he had often before heard of Welsh hospitality, but that he was now about to experience it.

CHAPTER V.

THE JUDGE.

WHEN Judge Peffers arrived, Carry was agreeably disappointed by his appearance and manners, and was puzzled to reconcile his reputation for severity with the pleasant expression of his countenance, the gentlemanly blandness with which he conversed, and the deferential, almost courtly, politeness with which he treated his young hostess. Adept as he was at the law, he was not one of those lawyers who, having for a series of years devoted all their faculties to the study of their profession, have in so doing lost all relish for other subjects, either of thought or study, and who in the end make it the recreation of their leisure hours, as well as their daily work. No; Judge Peffers could converse on any subject which might be started, and showed, too, that his knowledge of it was no superficial acquirement, produced for the purpose of display, but the result of patient investigation and study. But though fond of

talking himself, he possessed the happy knack of saying all he wished to say, and yet allowing other people to have their say also; and as Carry sat and listened, and received the attentions he quietly bestowed upon her as the right of any lady from a gentleman, she was completely fascinated, and thought Judge Peffers the most delightful man with whom she had ever met.

'Surely,' she said, 'such a kind, courteous old gentleman would never be so cruel as hang a poor thief for stealing a few shillings. Some mistake must have arisen in the minds of men as to his real character, probably from his having in some instances been obliged to do his duty against the dictates of his own heart.'

'But he has a cruel mouth,' said the curate, who had been invited by Mr. Morgan to meet the judge, and with whom Carry was comparing notes in the garden after dinner on the evening of his arrival. 'I could not help thinking of a beast of prey every time he opened his mouth and showed his teeth.'

'Oh fie!' cried Carry indignantly; 'he can't help his white teeth. Perhaps they are false,' she added, anxious to give the judge the benefit of the suggestion.

'Perhaps,' said the curate; 'and they may have formerly belonged to some wild beast, which may account for the cruel expression they impart to his mouth.'

'Oh, Mr. Griffiths!' cried Carry, laughing in spite of herself. 'It's a wonder I can laugh when I remember what has brought him here,' she added, in a penitent tone; 'but I am not nearly so frightened since I have seen the judge.'

The curate had been an amazed spectator of Carry's enchantment, and he was sorry to be the means of dispelling the illusion, but he knew that if Judge Peffers took a severe view of the case, no consideration would move him to mercy. 'He is a very fascinating man,' he said, 'but'—

'And he must be a good man too,' said Carry, not observing his hesitation. 'Did you hear what he said about not saying Amen to the petition in the prayer-book to be delivered from sudden death? He said that if a man had a good hope beyond the grave, a sudden death was infinitely to be preferred to one preceded by a lingering illness.'

'Yes; he talks well. It's easy to talk,' said the curate drily. 'He has little hesitation in condemning to sudden death those who cannot be expected to have such a hope. But,' he added hastily, 'I do think he must be a good man, though a severe judge; I cannot doubt his sincerity, and no man who was not a sincere Christian could have spoken as he did to-day.'

'I should think not,' said Carry warmly; 'and I am sure, when he hears all about our thief, he will

take the side of mercy; you know it says in the Proverbs that men do not despise a hungry thief.'

'True,' said the curate, with a smile, 'but I am afraid that Judge Peffers will be guided more by the law than the Proverbs; we will, however, hope the best. I trust he has more sense than to be influenced by your friend Mr. Lewis.'

Mr. Lewis had also been invited by Mr. Morgan to meet Judge Peffers, and had looked on with complacency at the attentions paid to Carry by the judge; and when he had remarked that she reminded him much of his own youngest daughter, he had managed to catch his eye, and smile, and bow, as though a compliment paid to her should of right be acknowledged by him; all of which had provoked the curate to much inward laughter, though at the same time it fanned the angry, jealous feelings which had of late been gaining strength within him, and the words, 'Your friend Mr. Lewis,' were pronounced with marked emphasis.

'He's no friend of mine,' cried Carry indignantly. 'I am always civil to him, because papa says we must not offend him for the sake of the thief. I just pat him, as Mr. Darge would say,' she added with a laugh.

'Pat him!' said the bewildered curate.

'Yes; Mr. Darge advised papa to stroke and pat Judge Peffers,' she continued. 'I suppose he thought it would be advisable to keep him in good humour till

the trial was over. How glad I am *you* don't need patting to be induced to help us,' she added, looking up in his face with a grateful smile, which sent a thrill of pleasure through the young man's heart, but made him at the same time feel rather foolish, as though he were at that moment being patted, very innocently it was true, but very successfully.

'I promised to play *Of Noble Race was Shenkin*, to the judge,' continued Carry, 'but I have no heart for music just now; I have not touched my harp for weeks.'

'It might be well, however, to exercise a little self-denial and please him,' said the curate, who was at that moment in a peculiarly complacent mood. 'Who knows but that your playing may have the same effect on him as David's upon Saul, and infuse the spirit of mercy into his soul?'

'Miss Morgan, the gentlemen are in the drawing-room, waiting for their teas,' said a voice from behind which made them both start. It was Jones, who had approached unobserved; and Carry flew off, leaving Mr. Griffiths to follow mere leisurely, looking back as she ran towards the house to cry, 'I promised the judge a Welsh rabbit to supper; see that it is properly made, Jones.'

'Yes, Miss,' replied Jones;—'for the honour of the house,' he muttered to himself. Jones had his own private reasons for disliking judges, juries, and all the

other paraphernalia of the law, and had been in a state of chronic irritation ever since Judge Peffers entered the house.

'I made bold to hurry you, sir,' he said, as he stood back respectfully to allow the curate to pass; 'but Mr. Morgan's speaking to the judge about Miss Carry's thief, and Mr. Lewis is sure to light *his* farthing candle on the wrong side. I thought you would be better there to help Mr. Morgan; it's two against one, sir.'

'Certainly!' cried the curate, quickening his pace.

'Is there any chance, do you think, sir, of the poor fellow getting off?' asked Jones, as he followed close upon his heels.

'He is sure to be condemned,' said the curate, 'but I hope we may get a reprieve. You'll sign the petition, Jones?'

'With both hands, sir, if you'll allow me,' replied Jones, with a grim smile, 'and every servant in the house too; I'll see to that. It will be a cross with most of them, but it will count all the same.—Scotch Maggie can sign her name like any lady,' he added to himself, with some exultation.

'I've been practising my signature,' he whispered, as he threw open the drawing-room door for the curate. 'I'm not just pleased with the turn of the *jay* yet. It's not every day the king sees my name,'—a remark which sent Mr. Griffiths into the room with his face

twitching convulsively in the effort to restrain a laugh.

Carry was already seated at the tea-table, with Mr. Lewis in close attendance, whilst Mr. Morgan was standing on the hearth-rug beside the judge, who was looking over a printed paper he held in his hands.

'Ah, here it is,' he said, having run his finger down the list of names it contained, 'the last of them all: Richard Thomas, indicted for stealing a purse, the property of Miss Caroline Morgan. My dear child,' he said, looking at Carry, 'was it your purse the fellow stole?'

Carry's face flushed, and her lips quivered, and her father was about to answer for her, but Mr. Lewis got the start of him. 'Yes, my lord,' he said, 'it was Miss Morgan's purse the wretch stole, and she has, notwithstanding, been loading him with benefits ever since; she has visited him in prison every day, fed him with good things, taught him to read, and attended, I believe, to his religion, which one would have thought more the duty of a minister,' and the magistrate cast a triumphant malicious glance at the curate, who was looking at Carry, and did not see it.

Carry's eyes had filled with tears of mortification, and it was with great difficulty she kept them from overflowing.

As for the judge, he showed his appreciation of Mr. Lewis' eloquence by a slight elevation of his eyebrows,

as he said quietly, 'Just what might have been expected from Miss Morgan,—returning good for evil, and heaping coals of fire upon his head.' Then turning to her father, he put a few sharp, decided questions as to the particulars of the case, which he calmly declared to be a very bad one; and on Mr. Morgan gently insinuating that they hoped he might be induced to take a merciful view of it, he replied: 'My dear sir, the matter rests with the jury, and not with me,' which being true in point of fact, silenced Mr. Morgan in the meantime.

Then the curate, urged on by Carry's pitiful face, plunged into the question of capital punishment, which gave rise to a prolonged discussion, conducted with great good-humour on both sides, and which ended in the judge declaring himself of the same opinion as Mr. Morgan and Mr. Griffiths, but that, so long as it was the law of the land, he held it should be maintained and strictly enforced.

'I agree with my friend Sir Samuel Romilly,' he said, 'as to the great necessity for a repeal of the law for minor offences, and will lend my aid to any measure for that purpose; but I totally disagree with him in the matter of allowing criminals to escape the penalty, so long as the law remains. We may as well have no law at all as thus make it null and void.'

A murmur of applause from Mr. Lewis followed

this speech; but the curate remarked, 'Well, let us suppose for a moment that the law has been repealed; would you hang a man whose execution had been fixed to take place on the very day before that on which the new law was to take effect?'

'Certainly, I would respect the law,' said the judge; 'but that is an extreme case,' he added, with a smile.

'An extreme case for the criminal,' muttered Mr. Griffiths; whilst Jones, who was leisurely removing the tea things, and listening with all his might, turned sharply round, as though about to speak; but recollecting himself in time, he left the room in silence. When he reached his pantry, and got quit of his tray, he lifted his clenched fist, and shook it in the air. His hands trembled as he proceeded with his duties, but he put everything in its place and in the nicest order, and then, sitting down, he stared into vacancy, his clasped hands hanging listlessly down between his knees. His thoughts were very sad, for the whole affair had roused memories which, once awakened, were not easily dismissed, and he fought hard with the bitter, revengeful feelings which seemed for the time to have got the upper hand; but, ere long, softer emotions began to predominate, as the vision of a sweet, pale face, bearing unmistakeable marks of a broken heart, rose up before him, and he felt at once softened and rebuked, as he remembered his mother's

last words, 'God will temper the wind to my poor shorn lamb.'

'And He has tempered it,' he murmured, as he dried his eyes; and after an ejaculatory penitent prayer, he went in search of the cook, to give her particular injunctions as to the promised Welsh rabbit.

'I'll put my best fingers to it,' said Maggie; 'I'm as anxious to please the judge as Miss Carry can be, even though it's against myself,' she added, pretending to sigh.

This speech puzzled Jones not a little, his pride rising at the idea of her being in jest, and only mocking him; but if she was in earnest, he feared that his incautious words might bring mischief on his head. 'No' to say,' he muttered, as he left the kitchen, 'no' to say, but if I were thinking of marrying, there's anybody I know to compare with Maggie; but if she knew all, she would turn her back upon me in a moment; and if the worst comes to the worst, I've only to tell her to settle the matter.'

When he entered the room with the supper-tray, he found the judge in full flow of conversation, enjoying himself so much, and the cause of so much enjoyment to others, that, much to Carry's relief, he had entirely forgotten *Of Noble Race was Shenkin.* Even Jones was fascinated against his will; and as the judge interspersed his brilliant talk with anecdotes illustra-

tive of his subject, he lingered over his duties, afraid he might miss the end of a story of which he had been fortunate enough to hear the beginning.

'Yes,' the judge was saying on one occasion, when the butler returned to the room after a longer absence than usual, 'I was at one time intended for the Scottish bar, and practised as an advocate in Edinburgh for some years. It was my first brief, and that fact alone made me particularly interested in the fate of my client; but it really was a most interesting case, and I would have done anything to get that man off; and if it had not been for old Judge Brancton, I believe we would have succeeded.'

'What was his crime?' asked the magistrate.

'Sheep-stealing,' replied the judge; 'it was his first offence, and he had been under great temptation,'—here Jones, who had been listening attentively, let fall with a crash the dish he was carrying from the side-board to the table, causing the judge to start and pause abruptly.

'Jones! I never saw you do anything so stupid before,' cried Mr. Morgan; and muttering an inaudible apology, Jones picked up the broken pieces, and made his escape with them. His hands trembled, and his face was unusually pale, but he was in a great hurry to get back, and lost no time.

'And do you think he was sincere?' the curate was saying.

'I have no doubt of his being a true penitent,' replied the judge; 'and when I say that he repented, I do not mean that he repented only of the crime for which he suffered, but that his was a true scriptural repentance.'

'And he was hanged!' ejaculated Mr. Morgan, with a sigh.

'Yes,' said the judge, sighing too; 'to the great grief of his wife, an amiable, estimable young woman, who died shortly afterwards of a broken heart. I hoped to get a respite to the very last moment.'

'How this man has been maligned and misunderstood,' thought Carry.

'I was young and enthusiastic then,' he added, in a slightly apologetic tone, which raised her doubts once more.

'Such cases,' said the curate, 'should be enough to convince everybody of the absolute necessity for a change in our criminal legislation; in that man was hanged a good Christian, who, had he been spared, might have been a burning and a shining light.'

'Perhaps he was shamming,' said Mr. Lewis; 'it's a favourite trick with criminals to pretend repentance, in order to excite pity and gain the favour of the prison chaplain, and the ministers who may visit them.'

'God alone can judge the heart,' said the judge, 'but I had no doubt of his sincerity, and I have no

doubt of his being in heaven now; and as for currying favour with the chaplain and the ministers, he earned their ill-will and displeasure by honestly avowing that their instructions had misled and mystified him, and that he owed the happy state of mind with which he looked forward to his end to the ministrations of a gentleman who was in the constant habit of visiting condemned criminals, and who'—here again he paused, for Jones, who was leaving the room with a tray, turned round at the door to gaze at him with a stupefied, bewildered stare, and let the tray slip from his hands, to the great damage of the crystal it carried.

'Jones!' cried Mr. Morgan, in great displeasure, 'what is the matter with you to-night?'

'The fellow's drunk,' said Mr. Lewis.

The magistrate's ejaculation restored Jones to his senses, but the retort which Carry fully expected was not forthcoming. Withdrawing the gaze he had kept fixed on the judge's countenance, he carefully picked up the fragments of glass, and deposited them on his tray, and once more made his escape, without a single word.

'What can be the matter with him, Carry?' said Mr. Morgan, much surprised.

'He is not drunk,' said Carry, with an indignant glance at Mr. Lewis.

'I assure you, sir, the man is drunk,' said the

magistrate. 'I noticed it before. He has been staring at my lord like an idiot all the time of supper.'

'If he's drunk, it is the first time since he entered my service, and that's not yesterday,' said Mr. Morgan drily.

Carry was right, Jones was not drunk, though his behaviour had been strange enough to warrant the magistrate's suspicions; and had he seen him staggering to his pantry with his trayful of broken crystal, he would have considered them as indisputably confirmed.

Shortly after the judge had retired to his bed-room, he was surprised to hear a gentle smothered rap at his door, and on opening it, was still more so to see that Jones was the untimely visitor.

'My lord,' he whispered, 'I have brought some hot water; I thought you might like a foot-bath after travelling, and seeing you were so kind as to leave your valet at the inn, I thought I would make bold to offer you my services.'

The judge was amused, but he had too much knowledge of human nature not to see that Jones was actuated by some other motive than the excuse he had made; for he was gazing at him again with bewildered, anxious eyes, and, remembering his strange behaviour during supper, his curiosity was roused at the prospect of an explanation.

Courteously thanking him, he declared nothing

would be more refreshing, and, accepting his proffered services, allowed Jones to prepare the bath, and waited in silence for what he had to say.

But though he cleared his throat several times, the butler said nothing; but as he was pulling off the judge's boots, he suddenly paused in the very act to stare at him again.

'Have you seen me before?' asked the judge, beginning to feel alarmed for the man's sanity and his own safety.

Instead of answering the question, Jones asked another. 'If you please, my lord,' he began in trembling tones, 'what was the name of the man you were telling about down-stairs?'

'What man do you mean?' said the judge sharply.

'The man that was hanged for sheep-stealing, my lord,' said Jones, with some hesitation.

'His name!' said the judge; 'I do not remember his name, it occurred so many years ago. Did you know him?'

'Was the name Johnston?' said Jones, again replying to one question by asking another.

'Now that you mention it, I think it was,' replied the judge; 'did you know him?' he asked again.

'And your name is Peffers?' continued Jones, looking wistfully in his face.

'Yes, my name is Peffers,' said the judge; 'and I'd thank you to tell me the meaning of this cross-exami-

nation, and why you put questions instead of answering them?' The irritated tone in which he spoke recalled Jones to his senses.

'I beg pardon, my lord,' he said humbly; 'I know I am behaving like a madman, but I'm fairly bamboozled. I could have sworn when I heard you tell the story that you were the young advocate, Mr. Robertson, that defended my—the man that was hanged,' he stammered.

'I did defend him, I mentioned that,' said the judge, staring now at Jones even as Jones had stared at him; 'and my name was Robertson. I changed it on inheriting the estate of my maternal grandfather: and, pray, who are you?' he demanded, in a tone of wonder.

'I am John Johnston's son,' said the butler, a blush of shame suffusing his cheeks; 'and may the dying blessing of his wife ever rest upon your head, my lord,' he added, in trembling accents.

'His son!' said the judge; 'you can't be the little boy he left behind him?'

'Yes, my lord, I am the wee laddie ye were so kind to. If it had not been for you'—

'But you are an old man,—older than I am,' interrupted the judge.

'I'm not so old as I look like,' said Jones; 'hard-wrought folk turn auld much sooner than gentlefolks, and the pouthered hair helps,' he added, touching his head as he spoke.

'True, very true,' said the judge, scrutinizing him with his eagle eyes; 'but your name?'

'I changed it like yourself, my lord,' replied Jones, 'though not for the same reason; a man whose father died like mine has no need of an estate to make him change his name.'

'I believe it,' said the judge, unable to refrain from smiling; 'but no shame attaches to you,' he added quickly, 'you have been an innocent sufferer.'

'No blame, but plenty shame,' said Jones; 'nobody that has not been placed in the circumstances knows what it is. From the day I entered the hospital your lordship's kindness got me into for my education, I've been followed by shame like a dog for ever biting at my heels. The laddies were not long of finding out that my father had been hanged, and they shunned me, and looked at me, and whispered at me, till I lost heart and ran away. Then when I was apprenticed to a trade, it was the same thing over again. I was a marked man; the men despised me, and the maister suspected me; let me behave as well as I could, they could believe no good of a man whose father had been hanged. At last I set up on my own account, for I was sober and industrious, and saved money; but if an employer found it out, I was abandoned from that moment. But the last drop that spilt my cup in the end was my courtin' a bonnie sweet lassie, who, when she heard my story, which I thought myself bound in

honour to tell her, would have no more to say to *me*, but married a thoughtless good-for-nothing, whose father had died in his bed. So, seeing there was to be no peace for me, I changed my name, went into service, and drifted about from town to town till I landed in this foreign country, where I'm trusted and respected, though I would not answer even for Mr. Morgan and Miss Carry if they were to find it out. Ye'll keep my secret, my lord?' he added beseechingly.

'You may depend upon me, my poor fellow,' said the judge kindly; 'I am surprised you recognised me,' he added with a smile.

'I never once dreamt it was you at first,' said the butler; 'but when I heard you speaking, and saw you smiling, I felt somehow as though I was a wee laddie again, and old times came back like yesterday, and I felt like a body dreaming. I could not tell why, but when you told the story about my father, it came upon me like a glint, and I could have sworn it was you, but for the name.'

'I see you have not forgotten your Scotch,' said the judge.

'Do you notice it, my lord? I thought I had fairly conquered it,' said Jones, in a somewhat disappointed tone. 'You see, I never tell where I was born,' he whispered; 'I think it more prudent to conceal my nationality.'

Now, besides indulging in the Doric, which the presence of the judge had unconsciously brought back to his lips, Jones spoke with an unmistakeable Scotch accent, and the judge was somewhat amused at the mortification produced by his remark.

'Now that I know who you are, I have great hopes of Miss Carry's thief,' continued Jones; 'you'll never hang him, my lord?'

'It does not rest with me,' said the judge, very drily.

'Ay, but you have a great deal of power,' said Jones eagerly. 'I mind how angry you were at old Judge Brancton, that tried my father. It will break Miss Carry's heart, my lord.'

'Young hearts are not so easily broken,' said the judge. His tone and manner showed Jones that he had already presumed far enough, perhaps too far, and in respectful silence the butler proceeded to act the valet. But in the interval the water had become cold, and in spite of his humble entreaties to be allowed to procure a fresh supply, the judge refused all further attendance, and Jones found himself constrained to leave the room as speedily as possible.

'My mother used to call him an angel of mercy,' he muttered, as he slowly descended the stairs, 'and now they call him the hanging judge; but I for one will never say an ill word of him again.'

'I hope you are practising your signature, Maggie?'

he asked as he entered the kitchen with his pitcher of water, and found the cook waiting to shut up; 'I'm thinking the petition will be no more than needed.'

'Did the judge say that?' asked Maggie.

'Not exactly,' replied Jones, 'but I can easily see it will be a hard fight to get that poor lad off. You see I had a conversation with his lordship; he's an old friend of mine.'

Maggie opened her eyes very wide at this. 'Has he no' washed his feet?' she asked, as Jones poured out the water.

'No, he was not just inclined,' said Jones, guiltily conscious of an endeavour to raise his importance in Maggie's eyes by boasting of what would cover him with shame if explained. 'You'll mind the signature?' he said again, as he prepared to retreat from the kitchen.

'I can write my name weel eneugh,' said Maggie; 'but I'm no' quite sure if I should sign.'

'What for?' asked Jones, oblivious for the moment of what Maggie remembered so pertinaciously.

'Ye ken fine what I mean,' she replied, in a tone which opened Jones' eyes, and sent him away much troubled in his mind.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRIAL.

THE next few days always appeared on looking back like a misty feverish dream to Carry Morgan. The uncertainty as to when the case would be tried kept her in a state of constant and painful suspense; and she sometimes wished that it had stood first in the list, though at others she shrank from the fear of knowing the worst, and almost felt relieved at the tedious spinning out of some of the cases tried before it.

Then her father kept open house during the judge's stay, and she was obliged to control her feelings, and play the hostess with a smiling countenance. She often wondered afterwards if she could have preserved her composure without the assistance of Mr. Griffiths, who had a general invitation from her father, of which he took full advantage. Understanding and sympathizing with her feelings even more keenly than Mr. Morgan, he quietly and unosten-

tatiously took upon himself any duty which he saw was irksome to her in the circumstances, and even contrived, without offending him, to relieve her as much as possible from the attention of Mr. Lewis, who managed either to be invited or to invite himself every day whilst the assize lasted.

Judge Peffers was a study and a mystery to Carry; so pleasant and courteous in company, so composed and tranquil in appearance and manners, whilst he held in his hands the fiat of life or death to some poor erring fellow-creature. To know that he had been passing a severe sentence through the day, and to see him in the evening blandly entertaining, without any apparent effort to banish for the time unpleasant thoughts, those of the neighbouring gentry who had been invited by her father to meet him, was to Carry incomprehensible, and she could at times scarcely refrain from giving expression to her feelings on the subject. But she had a wholesome dread of offending Judge Peffers; and with the fate of the thief hanging in the balance, she sat and bore it all as patiently as she could, smiling on both judge and magistrate, whilst she yearned for the time when she might with safety turn her back on the latter, and treat him with the scorn which he deserved.

'Miss Morgan,' he said one evening, in a loud whisper which they all heard, 'your case may probably be tried to-morrow; you will require to be in attend-

ance in the morning, and wait till it is called. I will endeavour,' he graciously added, 'to make you as comfortable as possible, and it will be but a brief affair. Caught in the act, you know, makes it an easy matter.'

Carry's face flushed and her heart beat violently as he spoke, and instead of replying, she turned to the judge, and forgetting everything but the terrible stake at issue, and that the time so long dreaded had come at last, she cried, 'Oh, sir, you will be merciful? It is an awful thing to hang a man for stealing!'

Taken by surprise, the judge was for a moment completely at a loss, but speedily recovered his self-possession. 'My dear child,' he said, in a kind, soothing tone, 'your sentiments do honour to your heart, but your pity is thrown away on a worthless object. If there was no punishment in this world, the world would in time be overrun by crime, and the guilty overwhelm the innocent.—She puts me in mind,' he added, turning to her father, 'of the little son of Lord Keeper Guilford, who reproached Chief-Justice Hales for hanging people, and who, on the judge remarking that if he allowed them to escape they would continue to kill and steal, replied that there would be no fear of that, if he made them promise to do so no more.'

'Quite like a child,' remarked the magistrate.

'Yes, but like a child trained in noble sentiments

of honour,' said the curate; 'that boy would never, I am sure, break a promise or behave dishonourably.'

'But,' said Carry, blushing as she spoke, 'they might be punished, though not hanged.'

'Transportation is worse than hanging,' remarked Mr. Lewis.

'Would *you* prefer the gallows yourself?' asked Mr. Griffiths, who was the only guest remaining save the magistrate, and whose retort was the product of feelings exasperated beyond endurance.

'Sir, you overstep the bounds of common politeness,' said the magistrate; 'but I excuse you—your views are extreme and peculiar,' and he waved his hand with a condescending, forgiving gesture, which would have provoked the curate still more, had it not roused his risible faculties, which were, however, restrained by a beseeching warning glance from Carry, which sent him home at peace with all the world, Mr. Lewis included.

The trial came on the next day, as the magistrate had predicted; and when it was all over, and Carry found herself seated beside her father in the ferry-boat returning home, she could scarcely believe that the long-dreaded consummation had really become an established fact. She felt stunned and stupefied; she knew that the thief was condemned to die, but as yet she could not realize it. She knew that she had

told 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth;' but she also knew that she had been sorely tempted to say what was not true in order to save his life, for the counsel for the prisoner had questioned and cross-questioned her as to the possibility of her having dropped her purse in the garden, where it might have been lifted by his client, and he gave her every advantage possible in the nature of the case for subterfuge or prevarication.

But Carry could not tell a lie, though she knew that her hinting he might have taken the purse without entering the house would save his life. It was not the oath she had taken that prevented her. No; it made no difference to Carry Morgan; she could not have done otherwise though she had not been sworn; and she told the simple truth, though she felt as though her heart would break in the telling of it.

And now it was all over, the last hope gone; and she sat with one hand clasped in that of her kind, sympathizing father, whilst in the other she held the purse, which had been returned to her with all due legal formality; and ere they reached the landing-place, she gently dropped it into the water, glad to be relieved of what had caused so much misery.

In the judge's charge to the jury he had characterized the entering of a private dwelling-house for the purpose of plunder as a heinous, aggravated offence;

and their verdict had been unaccompanied by any recommendation to mercy.

'But we will strain every nerve; we have three weeks before us yet,' said Mr. Morgan, as he sat down to write to Mr. Darge, and entreat his promised help in obtaining a commutation of the sentence.

'I'm thinking the judge may get him off, Miss,' said Jones, who was waiting on the stairs to commiserate Carry.

'Oh, no, no; there is no hope from him. You were right about him, Jones,' groaned the poor girl.

But Jones was not so sure now about the judge's cruelty, and would willingly have withdrawn his former opinion, had it not involved awkward explanations, which might lead to an unpleasant *denouement*. So he only stroked his chin, and asked when the petition would be ready for signature.

His discovery concerning Judge Peffers had resulted in a complete revulsion of feeling towards that gentleman, who was no longer in his eyes the cruel judge, but the warm-hearted, enthusiastic young advocate, who had fought a hard though unsuccessful battle in the endeavour to save the life of his father; and Jones could not believe that the same individual could behave so differently in two cases so similar.

The judge had, in the prospect of finishing his work, bid adieu to Carry as he left the house in the morning, intending to pass the last night of his stay at

the inn, being obliged to leave at an early hour on the following morning. And had Jones known of a duty he performed ere he retired to rest, he would have been confirmed in his hopeful anticipations. Bespeaking, under command of secrecy, the services of Mr. Lewis as interpreter, and disguising himself as much as possible, he paid a visit to the condemned criminal in his cell, and there affectionately and faithfully set before him the way of life, assuring him that there was still time for repentance, still hope of mercy for his soul.

But though the judge spoke with all clearness and simplicity, it is probable that the poor fellow understood but little of what he said, for the address lost much of its spirit through the process of the magistrate's interpretation, and though he listened respectfully, it was evident that it made but little impression on him.

But as the judge, his mission accomplished, his duty discharged, turned to leave the cell, the light from an iron grating fell upon his face, and the thief recognised in the messenger of mercy the stern judge before whom he had that day quailed and trembled; and springing forward, he threw himself at his feet, and holding up his manacled hands, poured forth a passionate appeal for mercy, in piteous, imploring accents. He spoke in the Welsh language; but though the judge understood not one word of

what he said, he needed no interpreter to explain the purport of the petition, and sadly shaking his head, he hurried away, agitated and disturbed, followed by Mr. Lewis, who almost drove him to desperation by his humble apologies for the prisoner's unexpected behaviour.

Mr. Morgan, too, and Mr. Griffiths, conscience-stricken that they could have allowed so much precious time to elapse, visited the prison together the next day, and every day during the following three weeks, patiently teaching and imparting religious instruction to the prisoner, Mr. Morgan acting as interpreter when Mr. Griffiths spoke.

As for Carry, she could not again look at the thief—the condemned thief. She had seen him for a moment as he stood in the dock on the day of the trial, and wondered if she would ever forget the flush of pleasure which had crimsoned his pale cheek as she entered the witness-box, at the sight of one whom he regarded as the only friend he had in the world; a glance which had sent a pang of indescribable pain to the heart of the poor girl, who knew that perhaps on her evidence hung his life or death. No; Carry visited the prison no more, and the prisoner missed her much. He missed the lessons and the good things which she had given him, but more than all, he missed the kind tones of her voice, and kinder smiles which she had bestowed upon him; and he became

listless and apathetic, listening with an absent air and forced attention to the two gentlemen who were so anxious to benefit him, and who had yet deferred what they knew and acknowledged to be their duty till the eleventh hour. What passed through his mind during these three anxious weeks they knew not; they thought him stolid and stupid; but they did not know of his passionate appeal to the judge, nor how the rejection of that appeal might have hardened his heart to softer influences, might have closed his ears to the message of love and mercy, delivered by the lips of the very man who had the same day sentenced him to an ignominious death; how, denied mercy on earth, he might turn a deaf ear to the mercy which they told him of as Heaven's prerogative.

Nor did he know of the unwearied efforts put forth by his visitors to save his life. With them both, other duties were for the meantime sunk in the shade. No labour was saved in getting the petition numerously signed; and when the bulky parchment was safely despatched, they looked at each other and breathed more freely, as though the battle was already half fought, the victory nearly won; but they little knew all the difficulties and obstructions which in those days lay in the way of success in an endeavour to get a reprieve for a condemned criminal.

John Darge, to whose care the petition was consigned, knew well the proper official quarters to

besiege in the circumstances; and though a veteran in the cause, he put himself wholly at their service, and entered into the case with as much ardour and enthusiasm as though it had been the first he had undertaken.

But time wore on, and his letters, which had at first been sanguine and cheerful, gradually became less hopeful. 'I am depressed and out of spirits,' he wrote at the end of the first week to Mr. Morgan; 'but I will not abate one iota of my exertions. I told you that much depended on the judge, and when I called for Lord Sidmouth to-day, I found he had consulted with Judge Peffers, and the consequence is that he has become more prejudiced against the prisoner than ever. Examples are needed, he says, and he seems determined to add another to the already too long list. But, friend, let us not despair. My counsel to thee and to myself is this: let us *pray*, as though we could do nothing ourselves towards the end we have in view; let us *work*, as though success depended upon our personal efforts.'

Mr. Morgan did not need this counsel, nevertheless he felt strengthened anew by the letter from his friend, the contents of which, however, nearly destroyed any hopes he yet held of the man's life being saved. In addition to his anxiety about the thief, he was grieved for Carry, who, wanting the constant excitement which helped to support him, moped and pined, and as the

time drew nigh, became like the ghost of her former self.

The poor girl had a sad time of it, for she had cause for concern of which her father knew nothing. Taking mean advantage of her circumstances, Mr. Lewis made her an offer of marriage, hinting that he had it in his power to save the thief, but that his exerting that power would depend upon her acceptance of his suit. Scarcely believing that she heard aright, Carry demanded an explanation, which he promised to give, provided she first made a solemn promise not to give even the slightest hint of it to her father.

Carry hesitated, but he told her she held the thief's life in her hand, and in a moment of desperation she promised. 'Promise to marry me,' said Mr. Lewis, with a flushed face, 'and I will connive at the prisoner's escape, and will undertake to manage it in such a way that there will be no fear of his being retaken.'

'Connive at his escape!' said Carry, putting her hand to her forehead in a confused manner.

'Yes,' whispered the magistrate, though no one was within hearing; 'I have both the power and the opportunity, and no one shall ever know that *we* were privy to it.'

The emphasis on the *we* roused Carry. 'Go away,' she said indignantly; 'you, who have always argued in support of the law,—you, a magistrate, to allow a

prisoner to escape who has been committed to your charge!'

'All is fair in love or in war, Miss Morgan,' said Mr. Lewis, with a forced laugh, somewhat mortified that she had taken up this view of the case, instead of giving perhaps a blushing refusal to his proposal; for he expected a refusal at first. Stolid as he was, he could not but be aware that she had shown no such preference for him as to justify any hope of acceptance. Nevertheless, he had no fear of ultimate success; he had laid his plans well and confidently, and speedily returned to the charge. Working on the morbid state of the poor girl's feelings, he represented to her that she held the lad's life in her own hands, hinting at the same time that, but for her, it might never have been forfeited. He managed that his interviews should be stolen and private; and as the time drew near, he pressed for a final answer, alleging that he must have time to mature the plans he had laid, and that delay might hinder their success; and with no one to help or advise her, Carry, goaded to desperation, gave in, and promised all he wished, upon condition that the intended escape of the prisoner should be delayed till the eve of his execution, clinging as she still did to the faint hope of a reprieve.

It was quite true that Mr. Lewis had it in his power to effect the escape of the prisoner; and had

his breach of trust proceeded from a good motive, some excuse might have been offered for the amount of duplicity involved; but his motives were wholly selfish, and he proved himself a villain indeed thus to take advantage of the dire necessity of one who, in the very act of consenting, could not hide the loathing with which she regarded him. He left Carry's presence triumphing in the success of his nefarious project, and in leaving the house he met the curate.

Something inexplicably insolent in the magistrate's manner surprised and irritated Mr. Griffiths, who wasted but few words of greeting upon him, and whose irritation was considerably increased by seeing Carry retreating up-stairs as he advanced into the hall, and to find that she was denied to him on account of indisposition.

'She must have seen Lewis,' he thought, as he turned away disappointed and perplexed. 'Strange! surely there can't be anything in it. If I were her father, I would see her in her grave rather.'

The young man was very sad, and he would have been sadder still had he seen Carry lying on the bed on which she had thrown herself, her frame shaken with the sobs which came deep and heavy from her bosom, her head racked with the pain which made the indisposition pleaded no pretended excuse. Carry had not walked into the trap with her eyes shut, she

had had time to deliberate and make up her mind; she was acting a martyr's part, and she knew it. But when the line was crossed, the step taken, the promise given, all her courage gave way.

'What had she done?' she thought; 'and could she not draw back yet? A promise made in such circumstances and under such conditions could surely not be binding; but then the awful alternative!' Alas! she felt as though she would be doubly guilty of murder if she now drew back after having had it in her power to save his life; and as she sent the message to Mr. Griffiths, she hid her face in the counterpane, though no one saw her, to hide the blushes which crimsoned her cheeks at the thought of his knowing by and by what she had done. 'And he would see him, and know that I had seen him,' she murmured; and, strange as it may seem, this thought added no small drop to the cup of her misery.

Little did Carry's father know what was going on, attributing as he did her tearful eyes and feverish preoccupation of manner to the suspense which he feared was hurting her health and breaking her spirit; little could he guess what was passing through his daughter's heart as they knelt side by side in the church on the following Sabbath, and he heard the agonized 'amen' which she breathed, rather than said, after the extemporary prayer on behalf of 'that individual now lying under sentence of death,' which

the curate had added to the service each Sabbath since the trial; little did he suspect the agony which produced a smothered sob, as, full of love and sympathy, he took her hand in his with a firm, tender, soothing grasp. Poor Carry! she felt that Sabbath day as though death itself would be preferable to the lot in store for her if no reprieve came.

In the meantime, Jones too was perplexed and troubled. If the execution took place, he was bound in honour to ask Scotch Maggie to be his wife; but he was convinced he had only to tell her his own history to procure his freedom. Had this been all, Jones would have gone through the ordeal like a martyr, but, alas! Jones had discovered that it was he who would be the chief sufferer in the affair, and had not honour forbidden, he would gladly have kept his secret, and honestly courted Maggie. His good opinion of her, too, was much increased by her behaviour during this time of suspense, by the anxiety she displayed for the success of the efforts making to save the thief, and the depth of her sympathy with her young mistress in her trouble.

'It makes me wae to look at her,' she said to Jones one day; 'she's getting so thin and white, she's no like hersel' at all,—she's liker her ghaist. Didna ye say the judge was an auld friend of yours, Jones?' she asked.

'I kent him when I was a laddie,' said Jones, again unconsciously returning to the Doric.

'Weel,' said Maggie, 'he might take it better from you than from anybody;—what would you think of writing to him yersel', and explaining the circumstances,—how that Miss Carry he was so fond of is just pining away, and will maybe no' survive if the man's hanged?'

'Marget!' cried Jones.

'Weel, I'll no' answer for it,' said Maggie, the tears starting to her eyes. 'I thought, when I saw her coming from the church last Sabbath, she was like a creature no' lang for this world.'

'But I could not use the freedom to write to Judge Peffers,' said Jones.

'It's a case of life and death, baith with her and the thief,' said Maggie, 'and in such a case we should not stand on our peremptors.'

'You're a sensible girl, Maggie,' sighed Jones, 'and as you write a far better hand than me, I think you had better write the letter.'

'If you'll 'dite it, I'll write it,' cried Maggie eagerly; 'and it must be done immediately,—time's precious at any time, but it's above price at a time like this.'

So it was settled between them that the letter should be written that very night, and though Jones had not so much hope of its success as his amanuensis had, he commenced its concoction without delay; and getting into the spirit of it, he waxed eloquent as he

repeated it over and over again to himself, altering and improving each edition, as it passed through his mind. The composition was ungrammatical and unpolished, but it came fresh and warm from his heart, and pleaded the case more effectively than more elegant writing.

But when he had it all by rote, he came to a sudden stand-still as he remembered that Maggie was to write it; for the secret shame which had haunted his whole life was referred to more than once, and the judge was entreated to reconsider the matter, not as stern Judge Peffers, but as the benevolent young advocate, the identity of the former being evidently lost in that of the latter in the mind of the grateful writer of the letter. And how could Jones ask Maggie to write this?

Maggie, who could have no suspicion of poor Jones' bugbear, and who he now dreaded hearing it more than ever; and yet hear it she must if no reprieve came, and Jones began to think it might be better for her to hear it now than then. It was a bitter pill, but, like other physic, it might be better to get it swallowed quickly; and though he hesitated till the last moment, he gave a great gulp, and came out with it. But his story received a very different reception from that which he expected; perhaps the feelings with which he regarded his listener lent a pathos to his expressions and the tones of his voice

MR GRIFFITHS AND CARRY.

—*Carry Morgan*, page 104.

which might help to increase the interest with which Maggie listened to it; and far from showing either disgust or horror, Jones could not mistake her evident pity and sympathy. But if he had any doubts on the matter, they were set at rest by the honest expression of her indignation when he told of the young woman who had professed to love him, but who had drawn back when she heard of his father's fate.

'She wasna worth caring for,' she cried; 'her love hadna been worth much. It made nae difference on you that your father was hanged; it was you that she was to marry, and no' him.' Now, if Maggie had hesitated or choked over the word 'hanged,' all that had passed might have been of no avail, but she spoke it out firmly and fearlessly, as though there was nothing to be ashamed of; and Jones blessed her in his heart as the first of his fellow-creatures, either man or woman, who had looked on him as untainted with the shame which clung to his father's memory.

'Everybody's no' like you, Maggie,' he said. 'But I forgot the judge,' he added; 'he made no difference; and more than that, he was particularly respectful to me before my master after he found out who I was.'

'He's a fine man,' said Maggie, dipping her pen in the ink, 'and he's sure to take another thought

about Miss Carry's thief;' and between them they produced an amended edition of Jones' letter, full of the sound reasoning of the butler's long Scotch head, and the gushing tenderness of a woman's warm heart pleading for the life of a fellow-creature.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REPRIEVE.

AGAIN Carry Morgan watched and waited, sitting on her old seat on the hillock in the garden. A change had come over the landscape since the day she had run after the thief, for it was now the gloomy month of November, and the waters of the ferry looked dull and leaden, in sympathy with the dark, cloudy sky; and the hills were tipped with snow and partially enveloped in mist, and Carry shivered unconsciously as she wrapped her shawl closer round her — unconsciously, for her mind was on the rack, and the cold unnoticed and uncared for, if not unfelt.

The last day had come, the day before that fixed for the execution, and if no message arrived, the thief would be executed on the following morning;—no, not executed, for Carry could not for a moment forget that she had it in her power to procure his escape; and, dreadful as the thought of his death was to the

poor girl, her feelings, as she thought of the alternative, became those of utter despair. But she had made up her mind, and never once thought of drawing back; she had the spirit of a martyr, though her courage, when she thought of the misery before her, almost failed in the prospect. But there was hope yet, and, clinging to the chance of a reprieve, which even Mr. Griffiths had allowed to be very faint, and of which her more experienced father had no hope, she sat and watched for the first appearance of the ferry-boat, which would bring the latter with good news or bad, for Mr. Morgan had gone away after breakfast to wait at the post-office for the London mail.

She sat long, and, worn out with anxiety and want of sleep, had fallen into an uncomfortable doze, when, waking up with a start, she saw the ferry-boat halfway across, and, sick and giddy with mingled sensations of hope and fear, she recognised in its occupant not her father, but Mr. Griffiths. A change had come over Carry as well as over the landscape since the lovely summer day on which she had stood on the same spot, eagerly scanning the passengers in the ferry-boat. Her ruddy, rounded, dimpled cheeks had become pale and thin, her bright, laughing eyes were dimmed with many tears, her lips compressed and white; and as her shawl fell back unheeded, her form was displayed, no longer plump and round, but slender and emaciated.

Her first feeling on seeing the curate instead of her father was one of disappointment; but he had been looking out for her, and catching sight of her as she sprang to her feet, he stood up in the boat, and waved over his head a stick to which he had tied a white pocket-handkerchief. Ah! then Carry knew he was the bearer of good tidings, and if she had been sick and giddy before with fear and apprehension, she was so now with relief and joy. Her first sensations were entirely unselfish. That the thief was saved was the first thought, which sent up a thanksgiving from a heart swelling with gratitude; but the next was one of ecstasy that she had escaped a galling yoke, a life-long misery; and scarcely knowing what she did, she flew rather than ran down to the landing-place, feeling as though she would never again know trouble all her life.

Mr. Griffiths, too, was much moved. So long as exertion was necessary, and the lad's life hung in the balance, he had been quiet and composed; but now that success had rewarded the efforts made to save him, he ran great risk of breaking down, and displaying an emotion of which he felt ashamed, as weak and unmanly. But the sight of Carry's agitation restored him to himself, and though he could not speak, there was a world of meaning in his eyes as he grasped both her hands, and shook them repeatedly.

'Oh, Mr. Griffiths!' sobbed Carry, as, drawing her arm through his, he led her in silence into the house.

'Commuted to transportation for life,' he whispered, squeezing her hand without intending it. 'A hard sentence we would have thought it, had we not known the other. I congratulate you with all my heart. I cannot tell you how thankful I feel, not only on the poor fellow's account, but on yours.'

'You are very kind,' said Carry, looking up in his face with eyes which, though full of grateful tears, had a brightness which he had not seen in them since the capture of the thief. 'How different from Mr. Lewis!' she added; and in the tumult of her happiness, she allowed the secret which had been corroding every fibre of her nature to escape her. The revelation took the curate by surprise. His first feelings were those of relief and exultation, his jealousy of Mr. Lewis vanishing like smoke; his second was an intense loathing for the man who could thus take advantage of a generous nature; and his third was a no less intense admiration for the girl who could thus have been willing to sacrifice herself.

'Miss Morgan,' he said hoarsely, 'if I were a Roman Catholic, I would fall down and worship you as a saint;' and to Carry's surprise he did fall down on his knees, and, taking her hand in his, he kissed it with the utmost respect.

Confused and blushing, she was still more surprised when, after pacing the room with hasty footsteps, he suddenly paused, and standing before her, fixed his eyes keenly on her face, saying; 'If *I* had made that condition the price of *my* services, would you have agreed to marry *me?*'

For a moment Carry hesitated, but the next, conquering her agitation, the product of varied feelings, she cried indignantly, 'No, I would not.'

'And why?' he persisted in the same tone.

'Because I would have known you were only trying me,' she said, keeping her tears back with difficulty. 'You are far too noble, far too generous to take advantage of any one, far less of me, to whom you have been so kind;' and Carry almost choked with the effort to hide from him how much his words had affected her.

But she did not know how much her words affected him, nor how strong was the restraint he imposed upon himself as he again paced the floor. Had Carry Morgan been poor and the curate rich, her ears might in all probability have been greeted at that moment by an outburst of passionate devotion; but that she was rich and he was poor seemed to him an insuperable barrier between them.

Love, however, might have conquered pride, had not Mr. Morgan arrived; and Carry, forgetful of aught else, sprang into her father's arms, weeping for joy.

'My darling, let us be thankful,' he whispered, as he kissed her again and again in a transport of joy. 'I have been at the prison,' he continued, 'but I don't think he realizes the truth of it yet, poor fellow. In the relief of knowing that his life is spared, one is apt to forget the hard life that is before him,' and in the midst of his joy Mr. Morgan sighed deeply, to the great wrath of the curate, who would have liked Carry's unexpected cup of happiness to be unadulterated by one bitter drop.

'Life is sweet in any circumstances,' he remarked, 'and more especially when the alternative has been a violent, ignominious death. It is we who have the worst of it,' he added with a forced laugh; 'we have to maintain him, as Mr. Lewis would say.'

'I cannot understand Mr. Lewis at all,' remarked Mr. Morgan; 'he is evidently disappointed. He could not hide his chagrin, though he tried hard. It is one thing to wish the laws respected, and another to regret the legal reprieve of a criminal.'

'He is a wretch!' said Mr. Griffiths, with a side-glance at Carry, whose colour had changed more than once whilst her father spoke.

'We owe you a debt of gratitude,' cried Mr. Morgan, seizing and shaking the curate's hands; 'you have left no stone unturned to help us, or rather, to save the life of a fellow-creature.'

It was now the curate's turn to blush, for, really interested as he had been in the criminal, he knew in his inmost heart that, but for the sake of Carry Morgan, he might not have put forth the efforts he had used to save the life of a poor thief.

'I don't deserve any thanks,' he muttered; and immediately afterwards he shook hands with Carry, without looking her in the face, and hastily took his leave.

'What is wrong with him?' said Mr. Morgan, much surprised. 'I am not aware of having said anything to offend him. All the time we were in suspense, nobody could have been kinder and more friendly; and now when he should have rejoiced with us, he looks as though we had injured him. He must be proud indeed, if he could be hurt at me thanking him for his kindness.'

'Oh, no, no, papa, he could not be angry at that,' cried Carry.

'He must be disappointed, then, like Lewis,' said her father; 'I can't understand either of them. What were you and he talking about when I came in?' he asked, suddenly facing Carry, and fixing his eyes on her blushing countenance.

'About—about Mr. Lewis,' she said, confused and frightened, as she remembered how she had disclosed to Mr. Griffiths the secret she had kept from

her father; and with her nervous system strained and overtasked, she gave way under his searching glance, and burst into a violent fit of weeping. Her tears afflicted her father much, and as she clung to him, sobbing and exhausting her pent-up emotion, no mother could have been kinder, or lavished on her more loving caresses or more tender words; and, mourning over her altered looks, he said she had been too much tried, but would now get rest and peace; that, devoured with anxiety himself, he had not been careful enough of her, but would now have leisure to attend to his own darling little girl. But though he spoke as though she was yet but a child, Carry seemed in her father's eyes to have all at once become a woman, and to have acquired all a woman's importance; for he drew his own conclusions from her agitation, and imagined that the curate had taken the opportunity of mutual rejoicing and congratulation to plead his own cause; and he was angry that she should have been thus agitated at a time when she had already been too much excited, though, at the same time, he could not help feeling pleased and flattered. But he forbore to question her on the subject, and, relieved from the dread which had haunted her, Carry speedily recovered her spirits and good looks.

Not so the curate; as Carry improved, he declined. The man was fighting with his pride on the one hand,

and his love on the other, and it was doubtful which would ultimately gain the victory. Never before had he coveted riches, never had money appeared so precious in his eyes; and he would have been a happy man could he have reversed their positions,—could he have made himself a rich man, and Carry a poor woman. Had he been guilty of endeavouring to gain her affections, the case would have been different, he told himself; but he prided himself on never having, during the whole course of their intercourse, either by word or look, crossed the line which, once passed, transforms the friend into the lover.

And yet the curate blushed as he remembered his behaviour when Carry allowed the secret to escape her about Mr. Lewis, and he wondered what effect his words might have had upon her, and whether she had been quick enough to detect *his* secret; and his heart throbbed and his ears tingled as he remembered her words, 'too noble, too generous,'—words which he felt, however, to be very ambiguous as to the state of her feelings towards him; and he tried to comfort himself with the thought that her whole speech on that occasion proved her feelings were indeed only those of friendship—a sorry, suspicious comfort at the best, which gave him only a heartache.

He was wandering about one day miserable and unhappy, when he encountered Mr. Lewis; and,

exasperated by the sight of the man who had dared to frighten Carry into agreeing to his infamous bargain, he sternly accosted him, and letting him see his infamy was known, he threatened him with immediate exposure if he did not at once resign his office and leave that part of the country for ever.

The magistrate was struck dumb, and giving him a few days to think of it, the curate left him, secretly elated that he should be chagrined by knowing that Carry had divulged to him the secret kept from her father,—a fact which materially added to the mortification experienced at that moment by the magistrate, who drew from it his own conclusions as to the ultimate relations between the parties.

His resolution was speedily taken, and he resolved on a plan which, judging from his own feelings, he thought would not only raise him in Carry's eyes, but send a pang of jealous envy to the heart of his rival. His plans had been well and skilfully laid, and that very night he put them in execution, setting the thief free at dead of night, well instructed how to baffle pursuit and escape recapture; and before the morning dawned he himself was many miles away.

Great was the consternation and the astonishment when it was found that the thief had escaped and the magistrate had disappeared. The curate had his own suspicions, but he thought it wiser to make no sign; and many were the surmises of the neighbour-

hood as to whether there was any connection between the events, and as to what that connection could possibly be; and the 'Mysterious Escape of a Thief,' and the no less 'Mysterious Disappearance of a Magistrate,' headed paragraphs in almost every newspaper in the United Kingdom.

To Carry Morgan the news was ecstasy. The thought of the thief being transported had begun to assume a formidable appearance in her eyes, relieved as she had been from the dread of his suffering a worse fate; and she daily hoped and prayed that he might never be recaptured. The departure of the magistrate, too, was an intense relief to her, and his having set the thief free (as she had no doubt he had done), without any possible hope of the reward he had bargained for, raised him in her estimation, and softened her feelings towards him not a little. Had the magistrate absconded without allowing the thief to escape, she might have suspected Mr. Griffiths of having had something to do with it; but as it was, she concluded that Mr. Lewis had done a generous, unlawful deed, and run away himself to escape the consequences.

Her father, much puzzled by the double occurrence, was still more so by Carry's confused and lame attempts to excuse and defend the magistrate when his conduct was spoken of as liable to suspicion; and in doing so she unconsciously enlightened him

that she had good grounds for supposing that he had indeed been the promoter of the criminal's escape, and he never rested till he had got the whole truth from her. His anger against Mr. Lewis was great, but he laughed scornfully at the idea that Carry would, as she said, have married him had the reprieve not come. He generously forbore, however, to blame her for keeping the secret from the father who could so well have helped and defended her; but by a curious association of ideas, he put the same question as the curate had done, and asked her if she would have married Mr. Griffiths had he made the same condition, and Carry, with a hot blush, gave him the same answer, though not exactly in the same words, and her father turned away to hide a smile. Meeting Mr. Griffiths the same day, he poured forth his indignation against the magistrate to one who he was sure would sympathize with him. 'If ever the fellow comes back!' he said.

'He never will,' said Mr. Griffiths quietly; and, imagining that Carry had informed her father of his knowledge of the secret, he told of his interview with the magistrate, which he believed had led to his absconding, 'though why he let out the thief when he knew there was nothing to gain by it, I know not,' he added, with a short laugh.

'Then Carry told *you* of the fellow's impertinent baseness?' said Mr. Morgan, much surprised.

The colour mounted to the very roots of the curate's hair, as he muttered something about the day of the reprieve; and Mr. Morgan, remembering Carry's confusion when interrogated as to what they had been talking about on that occasion, cried, 'No wonder you both looked guilty when I came in!' a remark which made the curate blush still more, for he knew such was not exactly the truth, every look and word of Carry's during that memorable interview being daguerrotyped upon his memory; and aware that her father might draw his own conclusions from her having entrusted him with a secret kept from himself, he bade him a confused farewell, and hurried away, fairly at his wits' end.

In the meantime Jones, too, was at his wits' end. He was free, and yet not glad to be free; not bound in honour to say another word to Maggie on the subject, and yet, though sincerely rejoicing in the escape of the thief, he would only have been too happy had the terms of the bargain been reversed, and he had been bound in honour to ask Maggie to be his wife on account of the thief not being hanged. It was Jones who carried the news of the reprieve to the kitchen, and who heard all the servants' comment on the good news, save Maggie, who said not one word, and never even looked at him. That Jones was very happy, not only on the thief's account but on his own, Maggie never once doubted; and she

would have been more than woman not to have felt somewhat mortified in the circumstances.

'You'll be glad, Maggie?' said Jones, catching the first opportunity of speaking to her in private.

'Yes, I'm real glad,' she replied with honest warmth; 'and I wouldna wonder but that *our* letter did the turn. And you've won your wager, Jones, and I wish you joy with all my heart,' she added, her face suddenly suffused with blushes.

'Marget!' cried Jones as she was running off; but Maggie made her escape, and left Jones disconsolate. 'She maybe thinks it's all a joke,' he muttered to himself; 'but if I was joking once, I'm in dead earnest now. But she'll never have me, after what I told her,' and Jones gave utterance to something between a groan and sigh. It was some time before he could summon courage to speak to Maggie on the subject again, and in the interval the thief escaped and the magistrate absconded, and in the general excitement the butler and the cook renewed their old friendly relations to each other, as though nothing had happened to disturb them.

One Sunday evening, however, Jones summoned courage to join Maggie on the road home from church, having made up his mind to get matters made right between them.

'Maggie,' said he, after they had walked along in

silence for some time, 'I'm anxious to get your forgiveness for my impertinence.'

Maggie was one of those people who go to church to worship, and as she turned her truthful eyes on Jones, her face bore marks of the elevation and refinement produced by the exercises in which she had been engaged. Jones was a decent worshipper too, but his thoughts had been somewhat distracted; for he had something on his mind which he was anxious to say, which Maggie had not, and the expression of her face rebuked and humbled him. But her reply helped him not a little.

'I'm sure, Jones, I forgi'e ye with all my heart; but I dinna think ye were impudent. If a' that was said was minded, I was as impudent as you; but you'll forgi'e me too, Jones?'

'I've nothing to forgive,' said Jones eagerly; 'but that's just what I wanted to speak about, Maggie; there's two sides to a bargain, you know, and you said that if the thief was not hanged'—

'Never mind what I said,' cried Maggie, getting very red in the face; 'I'll just say what you said to me, Jones, I kent you could take a joke.'

'That's all very true,' said Jones; 'but I'm not joking now, Maggie, and if it werena the shame that has blotted and blackened my very existence, I would'— and Jones paused, and looked pitifully at Maggie, as though he expected her to help him

out. But she only turned away her head and said nothing. 'It's just as I expected,' he sighed, 'and I don't blame you; it's no wonder you look upon me with horror, it's no wonder you despise me, it's'—

'I dinna look at ye wi' horror, and I dinna despise ye,' said Maggie, turning her kind grey eyes on him once more; 'it was no fault of yours that—that—what happened,' she stammered, anxious to spare his feelings by not putting the horrible fact into words.

'You're very kind and considerate,' replied Jones, not a little comforted and encouraged, 'and, Maggie, if I might make bold'—

'Come, now, Jones,' said Maggie, blushing and laughing rather nervously, 'I ken a' about it; ye think you're bound in honour to say what you're saying, but ye needna vex yoursel'; I can take a joke and laugh at it too, so say no more about it, and let us be freends, just as we used to be.'

'That's all over now,' said Jones. 'I'm in real earnest, and if ye don't take me, Maggie—but I might have known you would never fancy an auld man like me,' and Jones sighed deeply.

'You're no' such an auld man,' said Maggie; 'and I'm no' to call young myself.'

'Then what stands between us, Maggie?' he asked with great anxiety.

'I'm sure I dinna ken,' said Maggie, with a blush

and a smile, which opened Jones' eyes, and made him a happy man.

'Are you sure you're no' acting from a sense of duty?' Maggie whispered as they drew near the house, after having lingered considerably by the way.

'If you say that again,' whispered Jones, 'I'll ask you if you're sure you're not taking me out of pity, because my father was hanged!'

There had been another worshipper that Sunday evening who had found it hard work to keep his thoughts from wandering, for the curate had received a letter on the previous evening which had almost unfitted him for the proper observance of his Sabbath duties. It had informed him, that by the death of a distant relative in a foreign land, he had become heir to wealth such as in his wildest day-dreams he had never dared to hope for, and, breathless with mingled sensations of joy, fear, and hope, he longed for Monday morning, that he might tell his tale to Carry Morgan, and ascertain whether his unexpected good fortune would be productive of a still greater boon,—the prize he had coveted, but had scarcely allowed himself the hope of competing for. Now that the barrier his pride had raised between them was removed, his diffidence increased, and his desire to know his fate made him think the time that must elapse an age indeed.

But the time came at last, and having sought an interview with Mr. Morgan, he was received with open arms, that gentleman declaring that he had been such a stranger of late, he was afraid he had unwittingly offended him.

'I was asking Carry,' he said, with a quick side-glance at the young man's face, 'but she pled not guilty.' Mr. Griffiths blushed crimson, and cleared his throat; but Mr. Morgan had so much to say, it was some time before he got an opportunity to speak. 'I have a letter from Mr. Darge,' he began; 'it seems it was Judge Peffers after all who saved our thief. He came round all of a sudden, and actually begged the lad's life from Lord Sidmouth. It looks like a dream now it is all over, to remember the state of feverish excitement we were in; Mr. Darge's letter has recalled it all to my mind; he says if Judge Peffers had not interfered, he would have gone himself to the Prince Regent. I wonder what he will say when he hears that the bird has escaped altogther. I'm sure I for one hope he will not be caught, whether Lewis had any hand in letting him out or not. That fellow Lewis is a good riddance too; only fancy the wretch wanting my Carry!'

'I am afraid—afraid you will think me very presumptuous too,' said the curate, blushing and stammering; and Mr. Morgan listened with undisguised pleasure to the tale he had to tell, compli-

menting him on the integrity of his motives, and congratulating him warmly on his accession of fortune; whilst along with his permission to address his daughter, he gave him his own hearty wishes for the success of his suit.

But when Mr. Griffiths poured forth the same story to Carry, though in somewhat different terms, it was received in a manner which suddenly quenched his ardour, and checked the overflow of his happiness. Her face, which, when he began to speak, was suffused with happy blushes, blushes which banished his fears and confirmed his hopes, became blanched and fixed as he revealed the barrier his poverty had proved; and his eloquence came to a sudden standstill before her reproachful eyes and the pain expressed in her quivering lips, and he could have taken her in his arms and comforted her like a sick child, had he dared.

Several times she essayed to speak, but failed; but at last with a great effort she exclaimed, 'And if you had still been poor, you would not have said—what —what you said just now?' the blood rushing back to her face as she spoke. 'I could not help being rich,' she added, tears starting to her eyes.

'Oh, Carry, forgive me!' cried the young man, his eyes fully opened to the mistake he had made, and grasping both her hands as though he feared she might run away from him.

'You must be very proud,' she whispered, afraid to trust her voice, for the anguish of his tone went to her heart. 'Papa says that a proud Christian is an anomaly; what would you have done if you had been rich, and I had been poor?'

What the curate said or did in reply to this he never could remember afterwards, and Carry always refused to enlighten him; but the answer he gave made her lift her shy eyes to his, full of forgiveness, and he never again needed to ask to be forgiven.

Carry made a capital minister's wife,—at least both her father and her husband thought her first among women, for the seed sown in her youth brought forth abundantly, 'first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.' And long afterwards, when she was a staid, sedate matron, with boys and girls growing up around her, she received a letter from a far distant land, written by the grateful thief, now a respectable and respected member of society,—a letter which brought back her girlish days and her girlish trouble vividly to mind, and made her weep with pleasure; for the writer blessed her for having been the means of saving him not only from the gallows, but from a life of ignorance, sin, and misery, ascribing all that he had become, and all that he had escaped, to her unwearied efforts to instruct him whilst awaiting his trial.

Mr. Lewis, too, about the same time sent her a

newspaper, which announced the intelligence that he was lord mayor of a town in the colony to which he had fled, and which reported the proceedings of a public meeting, at which he and the lady mayoress had been presented with testimonials.

Mr. Griffiths literally roared with laughter, and declared it was like his impertinence; but Carry took his part and defended him, for her husband and father had thought it wiser not to enlighten her ignorance, and she still thought the magistrate had set the thief free from a generous motive, and had banished himself to accomplish his purpose.

Jones, too, had no cause to repent marrying Scotch Maggie. Indeed, the very fact that there was a woman in the world who could ignore the shame which hitherto had only, in his experience, to be discovered to bring the pointed finger of scorn upon him, did much to make even him forget the *bête noir* of his life. Mr. Morgan highly approved of the match, retaining both in his service; and having lost his daughter, he raised 'Mrs. Jones' to the rank of housekeeper, a position for which she proved herself well qualified. Altogether, Jones was happier than he had ever been in his life before; and his cup was very full indeed when, one day shortly after his marriage, he received a kindly letter from Judge Peffers, who not only thanked him for his interference, but declared that, but for Jones' letter, he never would have re-

lented, and the thief would in all probability have been hanged.

'I kent he had a kind heart!' cried Maggie.

'Ay, but it's *law*-hardened,' said Jones. 'You and me did him a good turn. Maggie, I'm thinking he'll maybe not be so hard on the next thief he tries;' and Maggie said 'Amen' with all her heart.